

# 1241263

Registered provider: Aspire Care and Education Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to six children who are on the autistic spectrum and/or have learning difficulties, together with speech, language and communication needs.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 December 2019 and 10 March 2020

|                                                                                           |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>outstanding</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|

|                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 30 October 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 30/10/2018      | Full            | Outstanding            |
| 16/01/2018      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each quality of care review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

### Inspection judgements

#### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

A value-driven staff team, that seeks to understand and respond to the inner world of each child, enables the children to develop feelings of belonging and attachment. The staff's patient and creative approaches reduce the children's anxieties and feed their growing confidence. Children go out and experience new things, have fun and enjoy increased feelings of competence and achievement.

Skilled staff believe in the children's abilities and capacity to learn. They recognise the individual barriers that children face and seek to reduce these. For example, when a child struggles to attend school, the home environment and staff's focus is adapted. For one child, sensory activities and cake-making are occurring in the child's bedroom while the child is experiencing significant mental and emotional health difficulties. A staff member said, '[Child's name] is really struggling, so we need to bring the experiences to them in a way that they can cope with.'

When children face challenges, complex emotions and anxieties, the staff are solution-focused, resilient and unwavering in their commitment to the children. A social worker and team manager from a placing authority described the staff team as, 'The most committed and capable that I have ever worked with,' and, 'They have gone beyond all of my expectations for [child's name].'

Staff fully understand and appreciate their part in multi-agency working. Consequently, children's care plans and support packages evidence excellent consultation with other involved professionals. For example, the input from the child and adolescent mental health services team, school colleagues, social workers and parents has resulted in a comprehensive and very well-thought-out plan for one child. This has included major refurbishment of the home and bringing forward plans to open another home, with this child at the very core of its planning. This approach leaves no stone unturned in finding the resources that the child needs and is an example of outstanding practice between the leaders and the placing authority.

Staff review and refine their use of communication aids and tools to maximise each child's ability to express their wishes and feelings. Consequently, the children use their own preferred methods to make minor and major choices. Staff read the children well. They interpret and understand the children's behaviours, sounds, gestures and body language. However, they are forever mindful that the children could struggle in new environments or with unfamiliar people. To this end, the staff consistently encourage the children's understanding of universally used methods of signs and symbols, to maximise their chances of being understood in new and future surroundings.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Vigilant and dedicated staff work closely together to maintain exemplary standards of support and care that keep the children safe. Clear plans and strategies guide the staff effectively to support the children in managing their behaviours and in expressing their strong feelings safely.

Informed by research and practice, and supported with specialist training, staff work hard to reduce or eliminate any practice that might restrict the liberty or the movements of the children. This reinforces the home's values of staff demonstrating respect and care and contributes significantly to the children's best possible progress. Leaders continuously review the children's behaviours and staff's responses. Plans and approaches are subsequently adapted and developed to maintain conditions in which the children can thrive.

Staff think and plan carefully when the children face new experiences and situations likely to provoke anxiety. This reduces the chance of strong and unhelpful reactions that limit their learning and progress.

The staff team works hard to develop a detailed knowledge and understanding of each child, including their associated risks and vulnerabilities. This detailed understanding enables the staff to support the children effectively and keeps them safe during the interesting and fun activities in the home and community. Levels of support and supervision are high, and children do not go missing.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

An experienced, skilled and dedicated management team leads by example in placing the children at the absolute centre of all the plans and activities of the home. Leaders maintain staffing at high levels and this reflects the strong ethos of the home in striving to provide the children with the best possible standard of care.

Despite the high levels of care already achieved, the leaders and managers remain self-motivated to maintain high standards in all areas. Monitoring systems are regularly used; however, the registered manager's method of conducting regulation 45 reviews sometimes detracts from the purpose of making improvements.

The organisation shows a strong commitment to providing the best possible care through its investment in a strong senior leadership structure. The plans to grow the service are clear and rich in succession planning for the staff team. Consequently, the team remains loyal to the organisation. The impact for children is a competent and consistent team of knowledgeable and skilled individuals.

Staff achieve high levels of continuity and precision in the care of the children through detailed and nuanced staff handovers and regular discussion of each child's progress and responses to staff support. This strong practice is notably integrated across staff meetings, dedicated behaviour support meetings, training and individual staff supervision. This increases the impact that staff practice has on the progress that children make.

Staff write the children's records in the first person and these are detailed and current. They reflect the care, empathy and precision in the approach of staff in supporting the children to make important progress in key areas.

The induction of staff is thorough and appropriately prioritised; the quality of staff supervision is high, and these standards are matched in annual appraisals. Staff speak highly of leaders and managers. They express pride in being a part of a cohesive and supportive team that is dedicated and committed to the progress and well-being of the children.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** 1241263

**Provision sub-type:** children's home

**Registered provider:** Aspire Care and Education Services

**Responsible individual:** Jonathan Deslandes

**Registered manager:** Maria Wells

## **Inspectors:**

John Pledger, social care inspector

Sophie Wood, regulatory inspection manager

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2020