

1256452

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited – The White Trees Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered with Ofsted in June 2017. The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2020.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2024	Full	Good
29/01/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/12/2022	Full	Good
23/08/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, four children have moved into the home and four have moved out. At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. Two of the children spoke to the inspector.

Children's moves into the home are well supported by staff. Leaders and managers carefully consider children's needs alongside children already living at the home. Leaders and managers consult with external professionals and ensure staff have the skills to meet the needs of the children. This has helped children settle quickly.

Staff quickly build meaningful relationships with children. Interactions between staff and children are warm and loving. Children speak highly of the support that they receive from staff. One child said: 'I trust the staff, they know and help me.' A professional said: 'At the core [of everything they do] they hold [child] in high regard. I would go as far as saying they love [the child]. They create a real sense of family, that's what [child] tells me.' Stable relationships have helped provide children with a strong foundation to make good progress.

Staff understand how to communicate with children effectively. They use a therapeutic model to guide their practice. Staff have clear understanding of the model and adapt it to meet the needs of the children. This has helped children form stable, trusting and mutually respectful relationships with staff.

Children are supported to enjoy activities in keeping with their interests. Staff are creative in offering children opportunities to explore their individual interests and try new experiences, such as walking over the roof of a major London arena. Children have attended pony clubs, gone to the theatre and joined a local gym and rambling club. Staff enjoy participating in activities with children. Three children have pets, which they thoroughly enjoy taking care of.

Staff collect memorabilia for children. This helps children to reflect on important events and accomplishments over time.

Staff provide consistent boundaries and structure to help motivate children to attend education. This contributes to children's engagement with education being positive. Four children have excellent attendance. Leaders and managers have sourced volunteer work for one child waiting to start college. They have challenged professionals, including the virtual school, and in doing so, secured continued education for the child in the interim.

Staff understand the importance of children maintaining relationships with people who are important to them. Staff frequently travel lengthy distances to help children spend quality time with family. Friends are welcomed by staff to the home to spend time with children. This has helped children build a sense of belonging to the area they live.

The home and garden are both spacious and give children ample space to enjoy. Areas of the home, including some children's bedrooms, require painting. Some carpets and sofa cushions are stained. Some areas lack soft furnishings. This detracts from the homely environment. Action was only taken during the inspection to address this.

Children have learned some skills in relation to developing their independence. However, staff do not have methods of measuring children's progress or identifying specific support to increase children's skills.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Family and professionals consistently provided positive feedback about the quality of care provided by staff and excellent communication. They recognise that children's risks have decreased as a direct result.

Staff regularly monitor, discuss and review children's risk management plans. Staff actively seek children's views and include them in their plans. As a result, the risks for children are understood well and have considerably reduced from their starting points.

When incidents have the potential to escalate, the staff use creative and person-centred responses that work well. These have helped to reduce the number and level of incidents. The staff adopt a relational approach. This helps enable discussions that support children to reflect on their behaviours. This has helped children learn from their behaviours.

When there have been incidents of children going missing from home, staff have responded in line with the missing-from-home protocol to help find and return them as soon as possible. Managers work proactively and effectively with external agencies, including a local police liaison officer. This multi-agency response helps to reduce these risks.

Children benefit from a nurturing and structured environment where positive behaviour is actively reinforced. Staff use consequences with children as part of a wider approach to behaviour management. Consequences are proportionate and help children find alternative ways to manage their emotions.

Incidents of restraint are rare and only used as a last resort. Reports are written in detail. Children and staff are given the opportunity to reflect on incidents. Staff are keen to understand causes and adapt routines for children to help avoid further incidents. All interventions are reviewed by the manager.

Staff work closely with external health agencies to ensure children's health needs are met. When children struggle with their health, staff take effective action to share concerns and act quickly on advice. Reflective conversations and encouragement to

develop healthier routines are prioritised by staff. Children who were previously struggling to meet their health needs are supported to access the support they require.

Leaders and managers take effective action to address safeguarding concerns and staff practice that has fallen short of expectations. This includes carrying out investigations to identify wider learning for staff. This helps staff to improve their practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and enthusiastic about her role, the staff team and the children. A knowledgeable and experienced deputy manager supports her. External professionals, including social workers, describe leaders and managers to be adaptive, proactive and accommodating.

Managers encourage the staff to take a kind, curious and nurturing approach with children. This has created a culture where children are treated with care and compassion.

Staff benefit from regular supervision sessions and annual appraisals. This gives them the support to reflect and develop their practice.

Managers have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development. They seek and appreciate feedback from children and other stakeholders. This means the care that children receive continues to develop.

Safer recruitment processes are followed. New staff benefit from helpful inductions which include comprehensive training. For existing staff, additional training is provided. However, staff do not always attend.

The home's statement of purpose is not fully reflective of the support on offer, specifically from the company well-being team. Leaders and managers have taken steps to address any deficits in relation to care for children and have sourced private therapists for some children. Consequently, children have not been affected as a result of this organisational shortcoming.

Leaders and managers have not sought up-to-date local authority placement plans for children. This means the outcomes that local authorities expect staff to meet may not always be clear.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (5))	3 June 2025
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii))	17 June 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home. In particular, ensure that staff have a clear understanding of, and plan for developing children's independence skills. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

- The registered person should ensure that staff access training to support children's needs. In particular, ensure that staff attend the additional in-house training. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that local authority placements plans for all children are current and on file. Registered persons have a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority. These working relationships will also be key to success in delivering the care planning standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)

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: 1256452

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited – The White Trees Group

Registered provider address: Whitetrees Group, The Old Snap Factory, Twyford Industrial Estate, Twyford Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 3LJ

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Belinda Devenny

Inspector

Lexi Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

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