

1256639

Registered provider: Utopia Children's Services Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company and provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home.

The registered manager has been in post since October 2023.

Inspection date: 28 October 2025

Date of last inspection: 1 May 2025

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children benefit from living in a nurturing and stable home that is well maintained and welcoming. Relationships between children and staff are warm and positive, with light-hearted conversations and shared activities, which contribute to a relaxed and supportive atmosphere.

Staff encourage and support children to participate in hobbies, leisure pursuits, and social opportunities that promote their confidence and independence. Staff actively facilitate and promote family time, recognising its importance to children's emotional well-being and identity.

Referral and admission processes have been strengthened. Meetings with children's social workers and team discussions are now embedded in practice, ensuring that risks are fully considered and mitigated before a child moves into the home. In addition, managers have introduced improved risk assessment templates that include transferable risks. Managers now also evaluate the skills, experience and knowledge of the staff to ensure that they are suitably equipped to meet the child's needs safely and consistently.

Managers take proactive steps to address any identified gaps in staff knowledge or expertise. Targeted training and development opportunities are implemented to ensure that staff are confident and competent in meeting the needs of the children in their care.

Children's cultural identities are thoughtfully considered and incorporated into care planning. As a result, children feel recognised and valued. There have been improvements in children's emotional regulation, along with a reduction in behavioural incidents.

Some restrictive measures had been in place since the last inspection, such as locking the lounge door at night. These were implemented in consultation with social workers and were subject to regular review. Following reassessment, the measures have been removed, demonstrating a proportionate and responsive approach to risk management.

There has been one recorded error in the administration of medication. The manager has acknowledged this and taken appropriate action, including staff training and the introduction of regular audits, to prevent recurrence and strengthen oversight.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/05/2025	Full	Good
05/11/2024	Full	Good
11/07/2023	Full	Good
08/06/2022	Full	Good

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that accurate and up-to-date records are maintained for all medication administered to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1256639

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Utopia Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Duncan Woodger, Unit 9, Wheatstone Court, Davy Way, Waterwells Business Park, Quedgeley, Gloucester GL2 2AQ

Responsible individual: Carleen Dobson

Registered manager: Sarah Gilkes

Inspector

Karen Hallam, Social Care Inspector

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