

1258276

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a small private organisation. It provides residential short breaks for a maximum of five children at any one time and long-term care for up to three children. The children may have intellectual and developmental disabilities and additional complex health needs, including autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Inspection date: 13 November 2023

Date of last inspection: 5 June 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be 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.

Inspectors have 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'.

Outcome 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.

Findings from the inspection

At the time of inspection, there were five children staying at the home. The home supports five children who have shared-care arrangements, while the majority of the other children have short breaks.

The decor and garden have improved. The patio has been repaired, which makes the garden a safer and more accessible area for children. A large mural with some sensory materials attached has been drawn in the hallway, which enhances children's enjoyment of the home.

Children's care plans and risk assessments are kept up to date. There are systems for key workers to keep these plans updated. Staff know the children well and understand their individual needs.

Referrals to the local authority designated officer (LADO) are made promptly. Following referrals, the manager follows guidance from the LADO. Internal investigations are undertaken in detail, with clear outcomes identified. Complaints are investigated thoroughly, and learning is identified.

The managers are regularly at the home. They have implemented new management oversight systems, which are still being developed. The managers have made some improvements to monitoring; however, learning from monitoring does not yet contribute to the development of the home.

There has been a successful recruitment campaign, which has led to fewer agency staff being used. Safer recruitment processes are not always followed; for one staff member, a reference from their most recent employer was not gained.

Staff receive appraisals of their performance. However, there is no feedback from professionals, colleagues or children as part of these appraisals. This limits staff's ability to reflect on their practice and identify areas for development.

Children's wishes and feelings are not always known. Feedback forms have been introduced, which helps to gather children's views. However, children are not always asked for their feedback using communication styles that they use and understand.

Team meetings are not regular. When team meetings do take place, they are detailed and support staff to develop their understanding and practice. A lack of regular team meetings means that staff miss opportunities to share information and learn from each other.

The staff have made some medication errors. These are reported effectively, parents are informed and health advice is sought. However, there is a lack of learning from these incidents. Managers do not ensure that staff have the skills and abilities to administer medication following the errors being made. Staff continue to administer medication without checks on their capabilities or further training being undertaken. This could place children at risk.

The manager has met five of the seven requirements from the last inspection. Two requirements have not been met and have been restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/10/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, ensure that there are systems to ensure staff are competent to administer medication and that managers use monitoring systems to make improvements to the quality of care.	29 December 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	29 December 2023

In particular, ensure that comprehensive recruitment checks are carried out. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings. (Regulation 7 (1)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	12 January 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the team provides high-quality care for all children living at the home. In particular, ensure there are regular team meetings to support staff and discuss areas of practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should ensure that appraisals take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1258276

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: 80 Compair Crescent, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 0EH

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Katy Plumridge

Inspector

Leanne Lyon, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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