

1258276

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of two residential short-break services run by a small private organisation. The service provides residential short breaks for a maximum of four children at any one time and longer-term care for up to two children between the ages of six and 18. The children may have intellectual and developmental disabilities and additional complex health needs, including autism spectrum disorder.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 17 January 2022.

Inspection date: 21 March 2022

Date of last inspection: 21 July 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has improved effectiveness.

The manager has addressed two of the five requirements raised at the full inspection. Activities provided for the children have increased. Sensory sessions, music activities and trips to local parks, the zoo and the coast have broadened the experiences offered to children during their stays at the home. Safe recruitment processes have improved and are comprehensively carried out to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

There have been improvements to the interior of the home since the last inspection. Bedrooms have been redecorated to reflect children's interests. The home's gardens are large and provide space for children to be outside. However, they are not well maintained. Uneven surfaces, garden debris and discarded play equipment limit the areas that children who use wheelchairs can access. There are no swing seats on the frames for children to play on. There is a lack of play equipment; therefore, the gardens do not provide a safe, stimulating or enjoyable area for children.

Staff do not regularly receive practice-related supervision. Staff have not had their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised. This means that staff do not benefit from the oversight and guidance that they need to support them in their roles or with their continued professional development. Not all staff have achieved a relevant level 3 diploma within two years of commencing a care role.

Generally, feedback from parents, education professionals and social workers is positive. Parents are happy with the range of activities offered to their children during their stays. Children have good attendance at school. Regular communication between the staff, parents and school staff ensures that children benefit from a coordinated approach to their health needs and emotional well-being.

Children's plans are clearly written. Support plans contain guidance for staff to follow. Behaviour-management plans provide staff with strategies to respond to individual behavioural needs. However, staff do not consistently follow the plans. This lack of consistency does not provide children with the boundaries that they need to make them feel safe and secure. In some cases, daily records do not provide a clear account of the strategies followed. This is not helpful to the child and does not mirror the ethos and values of the home.

Staff inductions and training have improved. There is now a healthcare lead based at the home to provide health-related training, such as in buccal midazolam, first aid and percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy. Some staff have received training in safeguarding disabled children. However, not all staff have accessed the training.

The training records are complicated, making it difficult for the manager to keep track of the staff's training needs.

On one occasion, staff did not immediately report a safeguarding concern. Although there is nothing to suggest that the child was placed at risk because of this, there was a failure to follow basic safeguarding procedures.

The manager recognises that there are areas that need to be improved. Several staff vacancies have been filled, with continued recruitment ongoing to ensure a full staff team.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/04/2019	Full	Good
04/09/2018	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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(vii)(b)) In particular: ensure that staff have knowledge and understanding of the protection needs of disabled children; ensure that strategies identified in behaviour support plans are followed by staff. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	29 May 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and	16 May 2022

promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)) In particular: ensure that staff undertake training to equip them with the knowledge, skills and confidence to safely care for the children at the home; ensure that managers maintain clear records of which staff have undertaken training and the date of completion. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.	16 May 2022

The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	16 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the physical condition of the home and the garden contributes to a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have sufficient clear guidance on managing behaviour. Staff should set high expectations of children's behaviour and have a consistent approach to behaviour management. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 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

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector

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