

1259184

Registered provider: Ashwood Childrens Care Home Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to 4 children with social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection 4 children were living at the home. All the children contributed to the inspection.

The home is led by a qualified and experienced registered manager.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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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: 8 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2024	Full	Good
05/02/2024	Full	Good
16/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
01/09/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children benefit from living in a home that is warm, welcoming, and exceptionally well presented. The décor is of a high standard. The atmosphere is homely and nurturing. Personal touches are evident throughout, with photographs and celebration of children's achievements. Bedrooms are highly individualised and reflect children's personalities and interests.

Staff offer praise, show empathy, and have positive regard for the children. This is reflected in the records they complete, and all aspects of care given to the children. Children are at the heart of staff's practice, and staff speak highly of children. A staff member said, 'We support them to rewrite their own story and find out who they want to be and become the best version of themselves.'

All children are engaged in education. Staff work proactively to ensure each child's educational provision meets their individual needs, including advocating on their behalf so that their EHCP accurately reflects their progress. For one child, this advocacy enabled a return to education, and they are now on track to sit their GCSEs. Another child, who had previously not been attending school, now attends on a part-time timetable. Their learning is further supported through structured education delivered in the home by a member of staff.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met and children are supported to attend specialist appointments. One child experienced a significant accident. Staff stayed with the child in hospital around the clock, supporting their recovery. The manager created a beautiful book, sensitively detailing the events and the child's journey to recovery, supporting them to understand this process as they had no recollection due to the injury sustained.

Staff actively encourage children to take part in a wide range of new experiences and activities that nurture their talents and interests. For example, children have weekly music lessons or sports clubs. Children are supported and encouraged to socialise with their peers. Their friends are welcomed into the home. This helps the children to build relationships, develop independence, and gain a keen sense of achievement and self-worth.

Children spend meaningful time with family and significant others. Staff understand the importance of building and maintaining children's relationships with their families. Parents are positive about how staff promote family time and the respectful and inclusive way in which staff communicate with them. One family member said, 'Staff reinforce how much [name of child] is loved by me, while also showing him that he is genuinely cared for by them.'

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

Children feel safe and are kept safe by the staff. Staff know the children exceptionally well. They are highly skilled at reading the non-verbal cues that children show to express how they are feeling. The manager has also designed an app which enables children to contact her directly to express any worries or concerns. This means the manager and the team can intervene quickly to help the children when they feel worried or anxious.

Children have built safe, trusting and meaningful relationships with staff. Staff show children emotional warmth. The children and staff have strong bonds, with lots of laughter. Staff highly value the children's well-being. This supports children to make continued progress. Children feel safe and secure and have not needed to make any complaints. One child said, 'This home is the best place I have ever lived.' Adding, 'Staff understand me and respect me for who I am.'

Staff understand the risks that using the internet may pose to children. The manager is confident and creative in her plans with children in this area. Additionally, staff help children to understand any potential risks with internet use. This encourages children to learn how to keep themselves safe online.

The manager works closely with the psychotherapist who works in the home. This assists with the plans that help children to develop awareness of their emotions and behaviours. This unified approach means that children receive consistent care, advice and boundaries from staff. They help children to understand unsafe and inappropriate behaviours, as well as supporting them to reflect on incidents of concern.

Staff only hold children as a last resort and after extensive proactive measures are tried. As a result, incidents of restraint are infrequent. Debriefs are carried out with children and staff, to identify lessons learned. These are shared with the team and if necessary, practice is adapted to ensure that children remain safe.

Risk assessments are tailored to each child and clearly outline strategies for calming and supporting them. However, new strategies identified after incidents have not routinely been added to their plans. This has the potential to hinder staff members from understanding the risks. However there has not been an impact to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The leaders and managers are highly skilled, experienced, and deeply committed. A very capable deputy manager supports the registered manager, and both are motivational and nurturing. They use their knowledge and passion to drive excellent outcomes for children, leading the staff team with clarity and motivation.

The manager has established consistent and robust quality assurance measures. She completes regular audits of the home and regularly takes part in peer reviews and internal reviews of the home. As a result, the manager has an excellent oversight of the

development of the home, and staff continue to provide an outstanding level of care for the children.

Managers are tenacious advocates for children when they identify shortfalls in the service that they are receiving from other professionals. For example, when the local authority proposed a move for a child against the views and wishes of the child. The manager challenged this decision and supported the child to raise their concerns with their advocate and independent reviewing officer. As a result, the child was able to remain in the home.

Staff benefit from regular, reflective, and purposeful team meetings. These meetings cover a wide range of topics relevant to the children living in the home and provide an important forum for communication, idea-sharing, and constructive challenge. This supports staff to develop professionally and maintain good quality practice. Therapeutic parenting approaches are thoroughly embedded and are a consistent feature of practice within the home.

The manager places strong emphasis on staff well-being, and as a result, staff feel valued, supported and part of a 'family'. The team is stable and staff know each other well. The manager does not have to use agency staff, and new colleagues are carefully supported by more experienced members to maintain consistent, high-quality care. Staff speak about the children with pride, love and positivity, describing it as 'a privilege to watch them grow'. Their dedication and low turnover ensure personalised, consistent care that enables every child to continue making excellent progress.

The manager protects time for the staff to receive regular, reflective supervision. Staff have access to a comprehensive training package, which ensures they are well equipped to support children's individual needs. Additionally, the manager will often commission specific training when she identifies any gaps in staff knowledge or new emerging risks. This seeks to further develop their skills and has led to a deeper understanding of children's emerging needs.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Ensuring plans include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards,' page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: 1259184

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ashwood Childrens Care Home Ltd

Registered provider address: G43a Repton House, Bretby Business Park, Ashby Road, Burton-On-Trent, Derbyshire DE15 0YZ

Responsible individual: Jonathan Cammiss

Registered manager: Amy Self

Inspectors

Zoey Lee, social care inspector

Becki Cornes-Sinclair, social care inspector

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