

1263329

Registered provider: Albrighton Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to two children who have a learning disability. The home is privately owned.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2017 and holds a level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **Good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **Good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **Good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2018	Full	Good
26/02/2018	Full	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 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 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. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a))	28/02/2020

Recommendations

- The term 'equivalent' as used in the Regulations in relation to qualifications will be a judgement for the registered person based on whether the content of any qualifications held by the individual closely corresponds with the qualifications set out in regulation 28(2)(c) (for managers) or regulation 32(4) (for those in a care role). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.13)
- Ensure that the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written

report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved into the home and two children have moved on from the home. Considerate planning focused on children's needs and views helped to ensure that both children were able to visit their new homes prior to moving and that their experience of moving on from the home was positive.

One child currently lives at the home. Highly personalised care that involves the child ensures that his known needs are met and that he makes good progress in all areas of his development.

Staff understand the importance of learning in children's development. With advice from the child's previous school, staff took time to help the child work through relevant areas of the curriculum while he awaited a new school placement. This meant that the child was suitably prepared to start school when a place was identified. On starting his new school, supportive relationships between the staff and teachers helped the child to increase to a full-time timetable and he subsequently received a certificate of achievement from school for his improved attendance.

Positive and supportive relationships between the child and staff are growing at the child's pace. This increases his sense of safety and security. Staff are alert to the child's emotional needs and have sought advice from the organisation's psychologist while referrals to specialist health services are progressed. Staff have used this advice creatively to help improve the child's emotional health in keeping with his needs. For example, the development of an emotions board means that the child is less anxious as he can express his emotions in a way that he finds comfortable.

Staff have started to test out the use of research-based practice. As a result, the child has enjoyed exploring how different textures of foods can satisfy his sensory needs. The application of research in practice is a promising development.

The child has a good quality of day-to-day life at the home. He benefits from being able to access a range of opportunities that support him to maintain his existing hobbies and to try new things. For example, the child has enjoyed new experiences such as climbing and trampolining. He has also enjoyed a holiday to Blackpool. Photographs provide important mementoes for the child to reflect on fun times and how his talents and skills are developing.

Staff support the child to keep in touch with people who are important to him. A parent told the inspector that she felt involved in her son's care and she was particularly pleased with how staff were encouraging him to develop his independence skills,

including helping to do his laundry and cooking. A focus on developing life skills helps to ensure that the child is equipped for his journey into adulthood.

The home is clean and well maintained. The child has personalised his bedroom and takes pride in his personal space. A calm and peaceful atmosphere and the opportunity for the child to keep a pet hamster add to a homely and comfortable feel.

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

The child says he feels safe and well supported by the staff. An incentive programme focused on rewarding positive behaviour and the opportunity to set his own goals helps the child to feel increasingly secure and self-assured.

Attention by staff to reducing risk keeps the child increasingly safe. Risk assessments and plans for the child are detailed and are regularly reviewed by staff. Direct work with the child in areas such as fire safety, online safety and bullying helps the child to understand how he can keep himself safe.

Staff receive training in a range of areas to help them understand their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff talk with confidence about the action they would take should they have concerns for the safety of a child. Staff vigilance about a change to the presentation of a child on her return from school was appropriately notified to the relevant professionals. This helped to ensure that appropriate action was taken to support the child's safety.

The registered manager has acted to ensure that a previous requirement raised in relation to maintenance of behaviour management records is met. This included ensuring that the use of a helmet and harness was included as a measure of control in one child's education health and care plan. Since the last inspection, one child has been held by staff on two occasions to keep him safe. Records are detailed and the registered manager has reviewed these in a timely way. This helps to ensure the good oversight of behaviour management practice in the home.

Managers have undertaken significant work to improve the process of safer recruitment. Former employers are now routinely asked about why an applicant left a position where they had worked with vulnerable adults or children. However, for one member of staff the reference from the last employer did not give any information about the candidate's suitability for the post. This undermines the objective of the organisation's recruitment procedure to ensure that staff are of good integrity and character and are recruited safely.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A small and dedicated staff team ensures that the child receives consistent care. Clear systems to review the child's progress and high child-focused expectations for the staff team support the child to make good progress.

Staff enjoy their work and are complimentary about each other and the support that they receive from the registered manager. Team meetings, good-quality induction,

regular supervision and access to a range of relevant training help staff to feel confident about their role and responsibility.

The registered manager seeks to establish positive relationships with everyone connected to the child's care. Consequently, professionals including social workers, an independent reviewing officer and a teacher were unanimously positive about communication with the staff and the care provided to children. In addition, the registered manager has been quick to ensure that referrals for specialist services are made in a timely way to reduce delay in children accessing necessary services.

Despite the child's primary need awaiting confirmation, staff are meeting his presenting needs and he is making good progress. However, the registered manager has not ensured that the statement of purpose is clear about how the service is equipped to provide care and support for children whose needs are under assessment. This means that services offered and how the registered manager intends to deliver these services is unclear to placing authorities.

The registered manager benefits from regular visits by a dedicated independent visitor that help her to understand the strengths and development areas for the home. However, the registered manager's reports about the quality of care do not bring to life her verbal reflections on the strengths of the service and what could be done differently. This could impact on the development of the service as the breadth of the registered manager's understanding of how the service could progress is not reflected in the development plan for the home.

The registered manager has not satisfied herself that the qualifications held by one member of staff are equivalent to those required by regulation. This means that it is unclear if the member of staff has the range of knowledge required for the role.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1263329

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Albrighton Care

Registered provider address: Albrighton Care Ltd, Suite 4, Bermar House, Rumer Hill Business Estate, Rumer Hill Road, Cannock, Staffordshire WS11 0ET

Responsible individual: Isobel Green

Registered manager: Irene Merriman

Inspector

Alison Cooper, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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