

1263329

Registered provider: Albrighton Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person who has a learning disability. The home is privately owned.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 February 2018

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: N/A

Overall judgement at last inspection: N/A

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The young person is making good progress in all areas of her development.
- The young person receives tailored care and support from a consistent staff team.
- The young person is developing positive relationships with staff who work hard to understand her needs and preferences.
- Staff encourage the young person to develop her independence skills.
- The young person's verbal communication is improving because of support and encouragement she receives from staff.
- The manager and staff work well with other agencies to support good outcomes for the young person.
- The young person is encouraged and supported to take part in a range of leisure activities and hobbies.
- Staff make sure that the young person has access to a wide range of health services that help to promote her physical well-being.
- Managers make sure the home environment is well maintained and comfortable.
- Staff keep in regular contact with the young person's parents and support the young person to spend regular time with her family.
- Staff receive regular supervision that supports them to reflect on their practice.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Staff have not achieved the necessary qualifications in residential childcare within the required period.
- Managers have not ensured that the statement of purpose is up to date.
- Managers have not ensured that the young people's guide is available to the young person in her preferred style of communication.
- Gaps in employment history is not always verified prior to a member of staff starting work at the home.
- Managers have not ensured that staff are competent in the administration of medication.
- Staff do not have the necessary knowledge in sensory awareness to support the young person's range of sensory needs.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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This is the first inspection since registration.

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 registered person must ensure that any individual who works in the home in a care role has achieved the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. 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. (Regulation 32(5)(a))	31/12/2018

Recommendations

- The home's Statement of Purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the Quality Standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The children's home must produce a children's guide. The children's guide must be made available to all children when their placement in the home is agreed (or on arrival at the home if the placement is made in an emergency) and must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)
- The registered person must ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12) This is with specific reference to ensuring that staff are competent in the administration of medication.
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11) This is with particular reference to ensuring that the staff have an understanding of how to support young people with sensory needs.
- 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)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home was registered in September 2017. Since registration, one young person has lived at the home. A planned and gradual move in to the home meant that the young person settled into the home well and her parents felt reassured. A parent shared with the inspector, 'They made us feel so welcome. They came out and spoke to us a lot. They answered our questions and we went to see the house. It helped us to get use to her move. It worked out really well. She was very excited. '

The motivated staff team has helped the young person to make progress in a range of ways. For example, the staff have helped the young person to increase her verbal communication skills. The staff have helped the young person to become more independent and have more control over her life. For example, the young person has developed her life skills. This extends to being able to put on her own coat and shoes and to set the table and use a knife and fork to eat her meals. In feedback to the home a social worker commented, 'With regular encouragement and prompting [she] is achieving things that she never did before.'

Partnership working between staff and teachers has enabled the young person to successfully transition back into college after a period away. Regular communication and sharing of strategies has helped to encourage positive behaviour. This means that the time the young person is now spending in the classroom is increasing. A college tutor told the inspector, 'We have a clear plan of what we are doing with her now. It has given us a better look at her and she is now more settled in college due to the consistent approach. [The home] has played a huge role in her progress.'

The young person's physical health has improved because of living at the home. Staff pay attention to understanding and meeting the young person's health needs. Staff work closely with a range of health professionals to ensure that the young person has the appropriate support to improve her health. Diligent monitoring by staff of the young person's health conditions and monitoring of behaviour patterns is helping professionals and parents to understand more about the behaviours that are an underlying symptom of the young person's disability. Regular medication reviews with health professionals take account of the patterns in the young person's behaviour and help to ensure that medication is suitable to meet her changing needs. Careful planning has enabled the young person to attend her first optician's appointment without concern. This is a significant achievement for the young person.

Staff use pictures to involve the young person in menu planning and to increase her access to healthy food. The introduction of a balanced diet has assisted the young person to achieve a weight proportionate to her size. Staff support the young person to choose and take part in a wide range of leisure activities. For example, the young person

has visited the zoo and the garden centre. The young person enjoys going bowling, trampolining and going for walks. These varied opportunities provide the young person with new experiences that are helping her to become more confidence.

Relationships between staff and parents are positive, and staff support the young person to spend time with her parents. Parents are complimentary about the care provided to their child and feel included in the planning for her care. A parent told the inspector, 'They are amazing. We know everything that's going on. Every night expect Sunday we have an update. They changed the time of the telephone call to suit me, which was helpful. We definitely feel involved in what's going on. I am able to say my view and how I feel.'

Staff make good use of communication aids such as 'now and next', the picture exchange system and widget to help to support the young person to understand expectations and to enable her to contribute to her daily routine. For example, the use of photographs is helping the young person to choose her activities. Guidance in widget is helping to raise the young person's awareness to the complaints procedure and fire procedure. However, the young people's guide is not available to the young person in her preferred style of communication. This means that the young person does not have access to all of the necessary information about what care and support she can expect from the home.

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

A nurturing staff team works conscientiously to try to gain an informed understanding of the young person's needs and the underlying reasons for her self-harming behaviour. Plans and risk assessments are regularly updated to include learning arising from incidents and the multi-agency monitoring of the young person's health needs and patterns of behaviour.

High staffing levels and direct work with the young person in areas such as being safe in the kitchen and road safety help to increase the young person's safety in the home and in the local community. The young person has not gone missing from the home. Staff are clear about the action they would take should a situation arise. The young person is not at risk of child exploitation or radicalisation. However, staff have access to learning opportunities to raise their awareness in these areas.

Training in behaviour management helps staff to understand how to use techniques such as distraction to de-escalate the young person's behaviour. A learning disability nurse shared with the inspector, 'I feel reassured that the staff are skilled to meet her needs. They are mindful of the most appropriate ways of managing her behaviours at the lowest level and adjust the response according to the behaviour.' Physical intervention is rare. When physical intervention has been necessary management oversight and reflection through staff debriefs and staff meetings has helped staff to understand how to improve practice. For example, reflection on an incident that occurred during a community activity has illustrated to the staff the importance of ensuring that they check that disabled toilets are in working order before arriving at the venue.

Staff have access to a variety of training to improve their understanding of roles and responsibilities in relation to safeguarding. Staff speak with assurance about safeguarding procedures and the process for reporting matters of concern. Staff receive training in the area of medication and guidance is available in relation to the safe receipt, storage, and administration of medication. Despite this, on two occasions, medication has been administered incorrectly. Prompt identification of the error and swift action meant there was no harm to the young person. However, the manager has not assessed the practical competency of all staff in relation to the handling of medicines. This means that it is unknown if staff have any development needs in relation administering medication safely and effectively.

The young person has an electronic tablet, which she uses to browse family photos rather than accessing the internet. E-safety training means that staff are alert to the risks posed to the young person if she wanted to go online.

Staff ensure that the home is a clean, warm and welcoming environment. Regular reviews of fire precautions and health and safety arrangements by staff help to ensure that the home is well maintained and free of hazards. The servicing of gas and electrical equipment ensures that equipment remains in good working order.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since the home was registered in September 2017. She is suitably qualified and holds a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. In addition to the manager, the home has six members of staff. Three members of staff are still in their probationary period. Three staff members are qualified with a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. However, two members of staff have over two years' experience of working within residential childcare but do not hold a relevant level 3 qualification. One member of staff working towards the award but will not complete the award in the required timescale.

The registered manager is child focused in her practice. Staff have had the benefit of an induction to the home including training to help them understand their role and expectations. Supervision is regular and staff talk positively about how it helps to develop their practice. A member of staff shared with the inspector, 'We talk openly and honestly about how I am doing and the team is doing. We will iron out issues, share and ideas. We are constantly trying and adjusting the strategies to work with our young person.' Regular staff meetings support consistent practice and staff are positive about their work. A member of staff told the inspector, 'We do well in working together as a team. We are singing from the same hymn sheet. Everyone works to make sure [the young person] is looked after and encouraged. We all communicate well.'

The manager has ensured that staff have received disability specific training to help to equip them with the knowledge and skills to meet the young person's needs. For

example, training has included safeguarding disabled children, understanding autism spectrum disorder and communication. However, despite the young person having sensory needs, staff have not had the opportunity to develop their understanding and skills in this area. Consequently, they lack the required knowledge to inform their practice.

The registered manager and staff maintain positive relationships with a number of professionals including the police, health professionals, the young person's social worker and teachers. A learning disability nurse told the inspector, 'Communication from the home is second to none and they send me monthly updates. I come out about once a month and am always welcomed. We work well as a team.'

The registered manager ensures that all of the required statutory documentation is on record and that reviews of the young person's residential plans happen in a timely way. Staff regularly read the information available to them, which helps to ensure that their practice takes account of and learning from incidents and recommendations from meetings.

Potential employees are subject to an assessment of their suitability to work with young people and confirmed as suitable prior to commencing work with young people. However, on one occasion, there was no scrutiny of a gap in employment before the member of staff started work with the young person. This undermines the organisation's safer recruitment policy because the suitability of staff to work with vulnerable young people is not fully tested.

The registered manager has an understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development and has a development plan for the home. The registered manager finds the monthly independent visitor reports useful and responds in a timely way to the recommendations made. This helps to improve the care and support provided to the young person. For example, on advice from the independent visitor the manager now regularly evaluates the young person's behavioural patterns and uses the learning to inform multi-agency meetings and the young person's plans.

The manager has reviewed the statement of purpose following a change to the home's conditions of registration. However, despite this review, the statement of purpose does not fully reflect the home's approach and ethos to working with young people with a learning disability. In addition, the length of time one member of staff has worked in residential childcare is not correct. This means that current and accurate information about the service and support provided is not available to parents and professionals.

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Darren Smallman

Registered manager: Irene Merriman

Inspector

Alison Cooper, social care inspector

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