

1268518

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. The home is registered to provide care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. Since the previous inspection, two children have moved out. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home, who moved in during November 2023.

The home has two registered managers. One manager registered with Ofsted in March 2019 and is temporarily absent from the home. The other manager registered in September 2023.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 February 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 15 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
07/07/2021	Full	Good
31/10/2019	Full	Good
01/11/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The child currently living in this home is cherished by the adults who care for them. Their move to the home from a considerable distance away was carefully planned by the manager and staff. This has resulted in a successful return to the child's birth city, to a home where they have started to feel happy and settled, and to the re-establishment of family links. The child has already made significant progress, relative to their individual circumstances.

The child's introduction to their new school has been extremely positive. The headteacher and class teacher were welcomed to make visits to the child in their home before the child joined the school. This close working between the school and the home enabled the child to settle confidently into their new class and to make small but important steps of progress, academically, socially and emotionally. The headteacher attributed much of this to the relationships that the home's staff have with the child, and also with the school. The headteacher said that 'if the staff had not worked so well with us at the school to support the child's transition, it would not have been as successful as it has been'.

The manager and staff recognise how crucial it is to support children to establish and maintain positive links with family. The team has been pivotal in enabling the child to positively re-establish an important relationship with a family member, who the child had not seen for some years. This family member said that staff had 'done everything that they could to support the child seeing her, and she can't thank them enough'. Parents of other children who have lived in the home also made similar comments, such as 'They go above and beyond... they gave so much love and care to my child.'

The child is supported to enjoy a varied range of activities and hobbies, such as Brownies, trips to the beach, crafts and baking. These experiences are all based on the interests that the child has. Photos with narratives are captured in a memory book so that the child can look back and remember these positive times. Records of the child's day-to-day experiences, their highlights and their conversations with staff are carefully and sensitively written to the child. On a rare occasion, the manager has sought permission from the child's social worker for the child to have an overnight sleepover. The need to seek permission could have been avoided if delegated decision-making arrangements had been clearer. This has the potential to cause delay in decision-making and could impact negatively on the child.

The manager and staff are working closely with the local authority to ensure that plans for the child to have a permanent home and long-term security are expedited. Alongside this, the home's organisation has a built-in assessment model, which provides therapeutic support for the team, through the setting and review of

meaningful goals to help them meet the child's needs. This supports the child to maintain positive relationships and be prepared for a future move.

The manager and staff have kept in touch and supported children who have moved on from the home, so that children know that they are remembered and cared for.

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

The manager and staff understand and recognise the risks to the child, and the impact of the past harm that they have been exposed to. Staff use strategies effectively to mitigate these risks. The team takes advice and guidance appropriately from both internal and external professionals to consider how best to respond to the child. Written guidance for staff is continually updated.

The team meets together regularly to help to ensure that they are providing consistent care to help the child feel safe. Much planning and thought goes into the child having positive and happy day-to-day experiences that, on the surface, present to the child as effortless and warm. As a result, very few incidents have occurred. When incidents have occurred, the manager reviews the action that staff have taken, identifies any shortfalls and shares the learning with staff.

When children who previously lived in the home were exposed to safeguarding concerns, the manager continually alerted the social worker and other professionals. Risk-management plans were shared to encourage shared professional responsibility, highlighting the risks and corresponding actions that the team and senior managers were taking. Alongside this, action proposals were produced for the local authority to try to ensure that all professionals were accountable and working to the child's plan.

When new staff are recruited, clear procedures are followed to assess the safety and suitability of staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager currently working in the home is an inspirational leader who advocates strongly for the children she cares for. She has high expectations of the team and those professionals who support the children. Both registered managers have continually and robustly escalated concerns to professionals when children have not received the support and services they need, for example when children have had too many changes of social worker or safeguarding concerns have not been recognised.

Staff really enjoy working in this home. They celebrate children's achievements and have a positive approach to caring for children. The staff team is long-standing; nearly all staff have worked in the home for three years or more. The manager has completed a staff retention exercise to understand the reasons for this stability and to share the positive learning. Many staff members referred to feeling 'part of a

family'. Arrangements for supervision, support and challenge are robust and staff appreciate a range of training opportunities, some of which are personalised for the children they care for.

The home is welcoming and homely. Staff take pride in their home and look after it well. On visiting, it would be hard to know that it is a children's home, as there are no offices and any reference to regulations is discrete and barely noticeable. The child has a bedroom that is resoundingly pink, their favourite colour, and they refer to the home as 'their home'.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that decisions about overnight stays with friends should be delegated to children's homes staff by the placing authority for looked-after children. The level of delegated authority should be recorded in the placement plan to provide clarity and to avoid managers having to seek permission from the local authority unnecessarily. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.9)

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: 1268518

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Second Floor, Queensway,
Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Guy Mammatt

Registered managers: Lucy King, Stephanie Evans

Inspector

Sarah Canto, Social Care Inspector

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