

1269421

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for three children who may have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2023	Full	Good
04/01/2022	Full	Good
18/12/2019	Full	Good
14/02/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are receiving good care from a team who know them well. The staff have built strong relationships with children which means they have trusted adults to talk to. Children are praised for their achievements and get support when they are feeling low or worried. The manager ensures children have busy lives by providing them with a good range of activities. Children are consulted about their preferences, and their choices are fulfilled. As a result, children feel listened to and have fun experiences.

Two children have lived at the home for a considerable period. They have made good progress in terms of their social skills and sense of identity. One child has started to go out more and is beginning to form relationships outside of the home. One child has moved in recently and has settled in well. The manager and staff have developed a detailed care plan to ensure his needs are met.

Two children have moved on since the last inspection. Whilst living at the home the managers and staff worked hard to support both children following recommended strategies from the in-house therapist. They liaised well with other professionals to try and maintain their placements.

The manager and staff support children well with their health needs. One child is receiving individualised care to manage an ongoing health condition. Staff have undertaken specialist training to meet his needs. Staff ensure that children receive specialist help with their emotional wellbeing. Children have ongoing help from a speech and language therapist, therapeutic key work sessions and animal assisted therapy. They have a good understanding of the approaches used to support them. One child spoke about how she was being helped to manage and communicate her feelings in more healthy ways.

Children have bespoke education plans which help them to learn in their individual ways. The home supports education for two children in the home which is enabling children to make progress. One child is studying for her GCSEs. The manager and staff help children to overcome any barriers to learning by working closely with education professionals.

The manager implements sanctions in response to children's behaviour. For example, breaking things in the home. Whilst these are relatively low in number the range of sanctions is limited and lacking in creativity. Some sanctions are recorded in ways that could be stigmatising for children. The manager recognises that this is an area for development and has begun to address this. However, the work is not yet fully effective.

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

The manager and staff know the risks posed to and from children well. They have developed detailed risk management plans which help to increase children's safety. Overall risks and vulnerabilities reduce because of the approaches used at the home. For example, one child's self-injurious behaviour has decreased significantly which is a real achievement for her. Children say they feel safe at the home.

One child who lived at the home was at risk of sexual exploitation. There were occasions where she was missing from home. During these times staff kept in contact with the child where possible. They worked with the child's family and professionals to help her return safely. The manager worked with external agencies to manage the risk and make decisions that safeguarded the child. Children currently living at the home do not go missing.

Staff have been required to manage a high number of serious incidents since the last inspection. The majority related to a child who has now moved on. Many incidents required the use of physical interventions to keep the child and staff safe. Staff are well trained in de-escalation techniques and use restraint only when they had exhausted all other options. Physical interventions are recorded in detail and have good oversight from the manager and the training provider. Any areas for development are identified and acted upon. This shows transparency in practice.

Children can talk about incidents of restraint which is positive. However, for one child there were missed opportunities to reflect with them on their experiences of restraints from their perspective. This can hinder staff developing an understanding of children's lived experiences and what their therapeutic needs might be.

The manager understands his safeguarding role well. When concerns are raised by or about children, he ensures thorough investigations are undertaken. Outcomes are clearly recorded. Relevant professionals and family members are informed. Staff are recruited safely through safer recruitment processes. Parents have confidence that their children are safe in the care of the provider.

Children are kept safe online from risks of exploitation. Staff monitor children's use of mobile phones and other devices as any parent would. As children grow and develop, they are supported to take more age appropriate risks. They receive guidance from staff with issues such as sexual health and relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a strong management team. The registered manager and deputies work well together to maintain good oversight of the care provided. They have a strong sense of pride about the children and the home. The manager regularly spends time with the children. They feel comfortable to approach him with their requests and any 'grumbles'. There is mutual respect and warmth in the relationships between children and the managers. As such there is a positive and relaxed atmosphere.

The manager promotes an 'open house' ethos. A range of professionals visit children including therapists, tutors and advocates. As such, children have people to talk to outside of the staff team. This is important for children's well-being and safety. Professionals have established positive relationships with the manager and staff. There is effective communication in place which means children have strong support networks.

The manager has good links in the local area. This means that children get involved in events such as litter picking. They are rewarded for their efforts which helps them to feel part of the community and develop awareness of social issues.

Staff are motivated and enjoy their work. Some staff have left since the last inspection, however new staff have been recruited and have received a good induction. The team benefits from regular supervision where they reflect on their practice and discuss any areas for development. Staff enjoy a range of training opportunities. This helps them to keep their practice up to date. Training is very much focused on the individual needs of children. The manager ensures that training is sought quickly where new risks and vulnerabilities emerge.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths, and he implements learning to improve practice. For example, he has learned from the experiences of children who have moved on. The insight gained from these experiences has enhanced the manager's decision making about the children he accepts into the home. This has helped in terms of minimizing disruption to children's placements.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out (Guide to the Children's Homes regulations including the quality standards page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff understand that, as a result of past experiences, children will have a unique understanding of their circumstances which will affect their response to restraint by adults responsible for their care. The registered person should ensure that staff can utilise this understanding in their communication with children during and following restraints to help them implement practice which meet the needs of children (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.54).

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: 1269421

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Lauren Gilbey

Registered manager: Daniel Grant

Inspector

Laura Walker, social care inspector

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