

1277304

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children with social and emotional needs. At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home and were both present at the inspection.

The home is led by a suitably qualified manager.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 November 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: 30 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/08/2022	Full	Good
21/12/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/04/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Both of the children living in the home are making progress and are valued by the adults who look after them. Staff talk passionately about their roles and take time to understand the unique needs of each child. Staff are clear on the importance of building long-lasting and meaningful relationships with the children. Secure relationships with staff help the children to explore their feelings, which helps them to better understand their emotions and behaviours.

Staff understand the importance of education and support children to attend school. Leaders and managers strongly advocate for children to receive their educational entitlement, and they challenge the wider network when there are gaps. Staff provide a range of recreational opportunities for children to complement their education. Children are encouraged to pursue their interests and explore new hobbies.

Staff support children to maintain healthy routines and take responsibility for age-appropriate tasks. Shopping and cooking are shared tasks, and the children are supported with learning how to shop and cook healthy meals. Staff understand the importance of sleep and personal hygiene, and children are appropriately supported with these routines.

Staff support children to speak about a range of sensitive issues. In addition to ad hoc conversations, leaders and managers carefully consider the needs of the children and ensure there is a focus on targeted and meaningful topics for each child. The in-house therapies team provides further support on holistic goals for each child. Records are clearly written using child-focused language and include management oversight and learning.

The home environment is warm and homely with shared spaces for eating together, relaxing and games. The children's bedrooms are personalised to their tastes. Staff ensure that special occasions like birthdays are cherished events for the children, and the home is decorated with balloons and cards. Memory books are created for each child, and photos of special occasions, events and people are kept for them to look back on.

Staff take the time to listen to how the children wish to see and spend time with their relatives and friends. Staff work with the children's family members to ensure that they maintain regular, meaningful and safe contact with their loved ones. Children are supported to make their own decisions about seeing family.

Staff use a range of strategies to help children express themselves and reduce the risk of self-harm. When children have harmed themselves, staff follow clear procedures in order to ensure that children are safe. Staff work with external services to understand when

children may self-harm and how to support children to develop alternative ways to self-soothe.

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

Safeguarding concerns are well managed with robust and timely action taken to address issues. Plans to support staff to minimise risk for the children are clear and concise. Incident reports are clearly recorded with management oversight and some learning from practice.

When children go missing from home, staff are persistent in their attempts to locate them and ensure that family and relevant professionals are kept up to date. When children return home, they are warmly welcomed back and offered food and nurture.

Staff use a variety of de-escalation techniques to support children who are experiencing distress. Staff use the positive relationships they have with the children effectively to intervene and minimise risk during periods of conflict. Restraint is not used. Children are supported by skilled staff to have positive relationships with one another and resolve conflicts restoratively.

An age-proportionate approach is taken in relation to monitoring mobile phones and internet use. Staff use parental controls and monitoring systems on an individual basis to ensure that the children are not exposed to unnecessary risks online. Staff have open conversations with the children about any concerns, and there is an educative approach taken.

Staff support children to take age-appropriate risks as part of their development and to learn skills to help keep themselves safe. Children enjoy spending meaningful time with their friends and family in the community without any unnecessary restrictions.

Allegations and complaints are responded to in a timely manner and thoroughly investigated. The children and individuals involved are supported throughout, and the outcome is clearly communicated.

The safeguarding needs of one child are not fully met, and more could be done to address their individual risk factors.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a dedicated and passionate manager who has a good understanding of the children's needs. The manager is a strong advocate for the children and provides good challenge to the wider network when there are gaps in planning or services.

Leaders and managers ensure that there are enough staff to care for the children, and agency staff are not used. There are well-thought-out plans to cover any vacancies and

to minimise change for the children. Staff know the children well and demonstrate commitment and compassion in their roles.

Leaders and managers respond to children's views in a number of ways, and children are involved in decision-making in the home. Children know who to speak to if they are unhappy or wish to make a complaint. The child has an independent advocate.

Staff speak positively about the support of leaders and managers. Leaders and managers ensure that staff are up to date with mandatory training, and they organise bespoke training to support staff to respond to the individual needs of the children.

Leaders and managers have begun to make changes to recording systems so that they are more child-focused and meaningful. Records are written to the child, using trauma-informed language, and there is clear management oversight with actions and learning. These positive changes are beginning to embed across recording systems, but there are still some examples of negative and blaming language being used.

Leaders and managers ensure that they work closely with the multi-agency network around each child. Professional feedback is positive about staff, the care of the children and the progress they are making. Leaders and managers understand the importance of building relationships with children's families, but more could be done when communication breaks down.

Supervision and team meetings take place regularly but lack challenge or reflection on practice. There is a lack of critical challenge to accurately understand the home's performance and areas for further development.

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: 1277304

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

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

Responsible individual: Lucy King

Registered manager: Garry Hammond

Inspector

Stacey Pellow, Social Care Inspector

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