

1277453

Registered provider: Buckinghamshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to 5 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were 5 children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 7 September 2022.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 July 2026

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

Date of last inspection: 21 October 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/10/2025	Full	Good
26/11/2024	Full	Outstanding
26/09/2023	Full	Outstanding
17/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Most children benefit from a strong sense of stability and belonging, and they are supported by a stable and consistent staff team. Children participate in a wide range of activities and positive opportunities helping to create lasting memories for them. Staff are particularly effective at building relationships with children, and several children who have moved on from the home continue to keep in contact.

The management team are highly regarded by staff and instrumental in creating a familial culture across the home. Positive boundaries encourage children to spend more time with staff, and this time is used effectively to provide help and support to children. Staff have high aspirations for children and benefit from the confidence and faith instilled in them by managers to act in children's best interests and engage the professional network around children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most children are making positive progress and have developed good relationships with familiar adults. The turnover in the team is low, although some key adults have left since the last inspection, this has had minimal impact on children.

Children can identify preferred adults and there is strong sense of stability in the staff team. This helps to promote a sense of consistency and belonging for children. Children live in an environment that closely replicates family life, this is created in a natural and organic manner. Staff value spending time with children.

Children benefit from clear routines and boundaries. For example, children are discouraged from using their mobile phones in their bedrooms, increasing the time that they spend with staff. This is purposeful and staff use these opportunities to support the development of their relationships with children and offer them additional support and advice.

Staff enjoy providing positive experiences and opportunities for children, helping them to make positive memories of their time living in the home. Staff create memory books for children to help capture these moments, some children enjoy being part of this. A forthcoming holiday abroad has been particularly well planned, and children are excited about this.

Children have individualised education plans and staff collaborate with schools and alternative education settings to support children to engage and make progress. One child has recently moved into the home and so their education plans are still being progressed.

Each child has an individualised care plan with clear targets; these are reviewed regularly and capture a chronological overview of the progress that children make. This will help to increase children's understanding of their time in the home should they wish to access their records in the future.

Staff recognise the importance of children developing their own self-care skills and this is integrated naturally into children's day to day care. This helps to prepare children for their futures and promotes the development of lifelong skills.

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

Most children are very settled, and staff are focused on supporting their individual plans and helping them to progress. One child who recently moved into the home has yet to settle, and staff have responded appropriately when this child has struggled to appropriately manage their emotional and behavioural needs. Staff are working hard to support this child to develop positive foundations in the home and have worked well with other professionals with shared aspirations.

All children have a safe zone plan, this involves safeguarding conversations to help children identify their safe spaces and adults, both in the home and whilst out in the community. This helps children to know that staff are focused on their safety and well-being.

Children can access therapeutic interventions without delay. They receive appropriate support from a clinical psychologist in accordance with their individual plans. The clinical psychologist regularly visits the home as part of a working together arrangement with the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service. This arrangement also provides important reflective practice opportunities for staff to think about how they can help children.

Staff respond appropriately when safeguarding concerns arise and demonstrate a good awareness of their responsibilities. More experienced staff use their intuition to think about the best approaches to help children and have well-developed strategies to support this. A strong focus on creating a family environment helps to promote opportunities for staff to help and support children. For example, conversations during shared mealtimes.

Children frequently seek out staff to help them overcome challenges in their lives such as peer and family relationships or difficulties at school. The culture of the home promotes these interactions. Alongside this, staff conduct planned conversations with children, and this carefully coordinated support promotes children's well-being as well as encouraging them to be an active participant in their own progress.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

There is a strong management team who demonstrate an excellent understanding of the steps required to support children's progress and have high aspirations for what children

can achieve. Managers can consistently evidence how the support and care they offer to children directly impacts on the progress that they are able to make over time.

Managers are innovative and think carefully about how they can create the right environment for children to develop a sense of belonging and make progress from earlier difficult experiences in their lives.

Staff are unanimously positive about their role in caring for children, they are inspired by the ability of children to overcome adversity and continually motivated by seeing the impact of their support on children. One staff member said, 'Seeing children grow, develop, and achieve positive outcomes is one of the most rewarding aspects of my role'.

The working relationships between staff are positive, and this promotes excellent morale and a shared sense of responsibility. Managers encourage staff to take leading roles in engaging the professional network around children to work towards mutually agreed goals. Staff advocate on behalf of children to ensure that their needs are met.

Staff are united in seeking to provide the best care for children. More experienced staff are positive role models for staff who have joined the home more recently. This has helped newer staff to feel supported when responding to children's emotional and behavioural needs.

Managers are aware of the importance of finding common connections between staff and children, utilising these as the foundations for the development of relationships. The independent reviewing officer for one child said, 'Managers deploy their staff resources well in my experience, thinking carefully about who is best placed to make a connection with the individual child'.

There is a reflective culture that is highly influenced by research informed approaches and facilitated by the home's consultant clinical psychologist. Consequently, reflective practice is embedded across the staff team and recording keeping, enabling staff to continually think about their roles with children.

Staff training is up to date and there is a system in place to maintain oversight of this. All staff receive a wide range of training including medication management, first aid, fire safety and safeguarding. Alongside this there is a comprehensive e-learning programme. The workforce development plan has with individual pages for each member of staff, who are also able to seek training for individual areas of interest.

Supervision is consistent and of good quality, managers use this time effectively with staff to enable them to think about their role and personal development. This also provides opportunities to connect staff objectives with those of the wider local authority.

Team meetings are particularly well used as an opportunity for staff development, focusing on changes across social care, and promoting opportunities for staff to learn about the legislative framework governing looked after children. This enhances staff understanding of their regulatory and safeguarding responsibilities.

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: 1277453

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Buckinghamshire Council

Registered provider address: Walton Street Offices, Walton Street, Aylesbury HP20 1UA

Responsible individual: Laura Armstrong

Registered manager: Antony Metcalfe

Inspector

Ashley Edwards, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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