

2535166

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to care for up to three children who may have learning disabilities. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. Two other children have also lived in the home since the last inspection.

There is a new manager in post.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2022	Full	Good
27/04/2021	Full	Good
10/12/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Progress for the child currently living in the home is insufficient. Managers and staff have not instilled sufficient positive routines and boundaries in the home for the child. The child's daily routine lacks structure. The child has a disrupted sleep pattern, and they regularly miss meals.

While the child has developed positive relationships with some staff team members, and they enjoy some activities with them, the child spends prolonged periods playing games online on their own. The child is keen to progress with their learning. However, the education opportunities currently provided to the child are minimal and more action is required to improve this provision.

The child is not being helped well enough to build friendships. They are isolated and do not spend time with their peers in line with their wishes and views. Actions that have been identified for the child to spend time with their friends have not progressed.

The child enjoys spending time with their family and this has progressed well.

Staff support the child to attend health appointments, and an appointment has been made for them in line with their wish to wear contact lenses.

Managers and staff discussed with pride the achievements of two children who have moved on from the home since the last inspection. In particular, the progress made by one child is also reflected in positive partner agency feedback. Managers advocated for these children and challenged services when they considered a response was not adequate to meet the child's needs. This helped the children to move on to suitable adult provisions successfully. One young person achieved a qualification at college while they lived in the home.

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

Current safety planning is not comprehensive and lacks a focus on preventative actions. On two recent occasions, staff have not intervened early enough to prevent risks from escalating and incidents have occurred. When the child left the home and boarded a train, staff contacted the police promptly. This ensured that the child was found.

Managers have not set sufficient boundaries for the child's online gaming time or supervised it effectively to keep the child safe. There is an over reliance on internet controls when the child is online. These safety measures alone cannot keep the child safe. Consequently, it was identified during the inspection that the child was playing

age-inappropriate games and streaming online to many unknown people. Staff and managers were not aware of this.

One child who previously lived in the home made a complaint about their care. This was taken seriously and a thorough investigation was completed. The outcome was communicated to the child and recommendations were made to improve the quality of care provided.

It is notable that for one child who previously lived in the home, serious incidents reduced. Their mental health improved, there were no self-harm incidents for a sustained period, and the child was helped to manage their own medication. Staff described working together as a team to help the child move forward and to move on successfully.

When medication errors have occurred, managers have implemented actions to reduce the risk of errors occurring in the future. There were no health implications from these errors, and one error related to a recording issue. Following a significant incident relating to a child previously living in the home and who self-administered their own medication, managers completed a learning review to improve future safety planning.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is a new manager in post. A planned transition between the previous manager and the new manager has minimised any disruption in the home.

However, there are shortfalls in the effectiveness of management and oversight in this home. There has been insufficient action taken to monitor the quality of care effectively and to accurately understand and improve the current child's experiences to enable them to make good progress.

Current risk management plans do not identify vulnerabilities effectively and they do not provide clear strategies for staff to respond to the child's needs. Language used in these records is not always helpful for the child and at times labels the child for their behaviour.

There is a lack of management oversight recorded across records. For instance, two significant incidents do not show the manager's oversight relating to staff practice. This reduces the opportunity for learning and to improve staff responses.

Staff training is up to date and in line with the child's needs. Staff receive supervision regularly to inform their roles and responsibilities. Detailed records show that team meetings discuss approaches to improve the care delivered to the child. However, these responses are not used daily to help the child develop positive routines.

Staff feedback received during and after the inspection describes that working in the home over this period has been enjoyable and challenging. They describe supporting

one another well and that they are committed to supporting the children they care for.

Some areas in the home are well decorated and the home is clean and tidy. However, other areas do not provide such a nurturing environment. This includes decoration of the home upstairs and the layout of the staff office area that is not in keeping with a family home environment.

Immediately following this inspection, the experienced responsible individual increased their oversight in the home and implemented an action plan to respond to the concerns. Ofsted will continue to monitor the home closely and will complete an inspection in due course.

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(vi) This directly relates to the manager ensuring that staff have clear direction and strategies to ensure that the child develops positive daily routines.	29 March 2024
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.	29 March 2024

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(viii)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that if a child is out of education, a timetable of educational activities is implemented during the school day. In addition, managers should challenge services effectively to ensure that the child is provided with suitable formal education and that they return to an education provision as soon as possible.	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;	29 March 2024

manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the manager must ensure that risks posed to the child online are fully understood and inform decisions about the day to day arrangements for the child. In addition, the manager must ensure that staff are provided with clear strategies to intervene effectively to reduce the risk of incidents occurring.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)) In particular, the manager must ensure that the monitoring of care is effective in safeguarding the child and promoting their well-being.	29 March 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that for children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2535166

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: Michelle Garstang

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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