

2544851

Registered provider: Alexanders House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider owns and manages this home. It provides care for up to three children who are aged between eight and 18 years of age.

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

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since March 2022.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 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 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/02/2023	Full	Good
18/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children live in a warm and welcoming home with a family atmosphere. Children have their own personalised bedrooms and communal areas to socialise. This helps children to develop a sense of belonging and feel part of their home.

Staff create an environment of acceptance, and children have a good relationship with each other and with staff. One child said that staff care about them and 'don't give up'. Both children have lived in the home for over three years. This promotes stability and a feeling of permanence for children.

Children's health needs are met, and staff ensure that children attend regular health appointments. Staff have agreed a process with the local GP surgery to bypass the queuing system for booking appointments. This helps children to attend their appointments without any unnecessary delay.

When children are excluded from school, staff provide opportunities for informal learning. This includes activities such as visiting a museum and attending the virtual school. Staff continue to work with education professionals to explore alternative education provisions that will meet the needs of children.

As children approach adulthood, staff support them to learn the essential skills they will need to look after themselves. This includes learning to cook, managing a budget, shopping and learning to drive. This helps to prepare children to manage aspects of their own care. This has increased their confidence in their own ability as they move on to their next steps.

Staff ensure that children spend time with their family and friends when this is appropriate. Children are supported to go on family holidays and to have family and friends visits inside and outside of the home. Staff support these arrangements to help ensure that children maintain relationships with those who are important to them.

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

Children are cared for by staff who know how to keep them safer. Staff understand the impact of early childhood experiences, loss and trauma and respond sensitively and compassionately to children's needs and behaviours.

Staff understand each child's presenting needs and risks. Risk assessments are regularly updated to guide staff in how to manage concerns. This helps staff to respond effectively when a child is at risk of harm.

Children can identify trusted adults who they can turn to with their concerns and when they need support. Staff help children to understand their emotions and how to

manage those emotions appropriately. This practice contributes to a home environment where children are rarely held to manage their behaviour.

Staff work as a team and with other professionals to help keep children safer. Specialist professionals are brought into the home to provide expert advice and guidance around areas such as child exploitation and drug and alcohol misuse. This enables staff to recognise the signs that children may be at risk, enabling them to take steps to address any concerns.

Children are cared for by adults who are trained to respond effectively when children go missing from home. Staff follow protocols and communicate with the child's family and other professionals to keep each child safe. A particular staff strength is the local community networking, developed to safeguard both the children in the home and other vulnerable children in the locality. Staff follow the home's missing-from-home protocols and communicate with children's families and other professionals. One professional described this communication with staff as being 'exceptional'.

Staff use creative ways to engage children in direct work. For example, staff and children made a video using hand puppets to explore risky situations. This child-led approach encourages children and staff to explore their understanding of risk and how to keep children safer. One child spoke about being proud of their contribution to staff development.

Staff understand the risks children face when using the internet. Staff check children's devices to monitor the things that children see and hear online. Children consent to this, and staff take immediate action to keep children safe if inappropriate content is found.

Alarms are fitted to bedroom doors to alert staff to when children leave their rooms. There is no updated assessment to demonstrate that the bedroom alarms are necessary to protect children. This could be an unnecessary intrusion into their privacy.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager with support from their deputy.

Staff are recruited using a robust recruitment process and are either qualified or are enrolled on the required qualification. This helps to ensure that staff who are working with the children are suitable and have the required skills and knowledge.

Staff undertake core training, and clear records are kept, ensuring that training is kept up to date. New staff follow an induction programme of mandatory training as well as additional training that is specific to the children's needs. Staff feel well supported by both the manager and their colleagues.

Staff receive regular and consistent supervision and attend team meetings. Staff also have practice-related conversations with leaders and managers about individual situations that arise. They consider what went well and what may need to change in how they respond to children in similar situations. This ensures that children are given a consistently good standard of care that meets their evolving needs.

The manager has implemented an efficient electronic recording system so staff can easily navigate documents and assessments. Children's files are regularly reviewed and contain the most up-to-date information. Plans for children are therefore individualised and meaningful.

Staff think carefully about the language they use in children's records. Information is individualised and written directly to each child using non-judgmental language. This helps children to understand what is written about them when they read what staff have recorded on their files.

The manager is responsive to the impact that new children coming to live in the home can have on those who already live there. On one occasion, the manager delayed plans for a child moving in due to a child in the home becoming unsettled. This demonstrates a child-centred approach to children moving in that carefully balances the best interests of all children.

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, The 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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(d))	29 March 2024

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: 2544851

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Alexanders House Limited

Responsible individual: David Palmer

Registered manager: Marie Carver

Inspector

Lisa Gordon, Social Care Inspector

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