

2559317

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider. It is registered to care for one child who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

There were no children living in the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with professionals involved with the child who had recently moved out.

There has been no registered manager in place since 1 August 2024. The previous registered manager has recently stepped up to another position in the company. The interim manager has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 August 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2023	Full	Good
05/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Due to the exceptional commitment of the staff team, one child lived in this home for almost two years and was able to develop close and trusting relationships with the adults who cared for them. Despite significant risks and challenges, the child made incredible progress in many areas of their life due to the remarkable support from staff. One professional said, 'The staff team were very committed and caring towards her. They went well above and beyond what could have been expected from them.'

Staff demonstrated considerable resilience through challenging times and always put the child at the forefront of their practice. The decision for the child to move on was made in the child's best interests as more specialist support was required. Managers worked tirelessly with other professionals to identify the most suitable alternative for the child and ensure the move was managed with the child's needs in mind. The team planned carefully for the child's move, and the whole staff team came in to say goodbye to the child before they left. The child moved out a few weeks before this inspection took place. The manager is taking time to reflect with the team before another child moves in, as this was a significant loss for the staff team.

The staff team embodied unconditional care and positivity and worked unwaveringly with the child to support them to understand and communicate their emotions. Staff sensitively listened to the child's views and feelings and ensured that other professionals heard these as well. The child wrote in a letter, 'Some things I like... are the staff because they are kind, caring and fun.'

Staff kept detailed records of the child's time living in this home. There are many comprehensive records that show the challenges the child experienced and staff's responses to these challenges. Staff also completed a positive record for the child each day. These records include photos of the child having fun each day, so that the child could see what staff liked about them and that they valued them even on their most difficult days.

Staff helped the child to continue learning, even when the child found formal education difficult. Staff were creative in engaging the child and made learning fun. The child had a portfolio of work they had completed with staff which included many fun activities every week. Some examples of these were 'code breakers' to practice maths, dance, yoga and mindfulness for PE, and science experiments in the home. This helped the child to associate learning with enjoyment and supported them to build up a base level of understanding.

Staff supported the child to manage their health, and advocated strongly when further assessments were needed. Staff supported the child to understand their medication, and challenged health professionals when treatments were not right for the child.

Staff taught the child how to take care of themselves and supported them to develop independent living skills. This enabled the child to develop more positive control over their own life. When further support was required, managers and staff advocated for different services to become involved to help meet the child's needs.

Staff took the child out to various places to enable them to experience different things. When the risks became too high for the child to go out regularly, staff ensured they had lots of fun times in the home.

Staff encouraged the child to have relationships with people who are important to them. Staff took the child out to various places to spend quality time with their siblings. When the child expressed an interest in getting in touch with another family member, staff helped them to do this in a safe way.

The home is warm and has sufficient space for children to relax and spend time with friends, family or staff. The manager is having the home renovated before another child moves in.

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

The child who recently moved out told professionals that they felt safe in the home and with their staff team. Staff worked hard to develop meaningful relationships with the child. With perceptive and persistent understanding, staff enabled the child to feel secure enough to engage with therapeutic support. One mental health professional said, 'I've never seen a placement before work as well as this one has. They would think, act, share, inform. Everybody there was motivated, involved, thoughtful and caring.'

Staff are skilled at identifying triggers and responding early to signs of distress. This diligent awareness helped the child to remain calm and staff de-escalated many incidents with skill, showing consistent responses and following strategies that worked for the child.

The child was not often held to keep them safe. When this did happen, it was as a last resort. Staff and managers talked with the child afterwards to help them understand what happened. Managers then reflected with staff about the situation to consider whether anything could be done differently in future. This ensures continued challenge and learning.

Staff and managers advocated on behalf of the child and actively challenged professionals when the child was not supported in the right way. This challenge and advocacy led to improved support for the child and helped to prevent further incidents. One independent reviewing officer said, 'The team there were quite forceful in holding professionals to account. They weren't afraid to tell us where we could do things better for [name of child].'

Staff and managers are proactive in planning for crisis situations. Managers created comprehensive planning documents for the child to be used with other services in

emergencies. This enabled all involved to respond in the best way possible for the child and helped to reduce misunderstandings and keep the child safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is experienced and has relevant skills and knowledge. They have worked in the home for more than two years and understand the strengths and vulnerabilities of the staff team. The previous registered manager has recently stepped up to be the responsible individual for the home. This change in management was carefully timed to ensure that it did not impact on the child. A new senior manager joined the company in 2022 and has led a significant change in culture and practice across the company.

Staff feel valued and say that they are 'exceptionally well supported' by leaders and managers. One member of staff said of managers, 'The level of support they give us is just top notch... but they're not afraid to challenge us either.' Managers have created a culture of reflection. They consistently evaluated the child's progress and challenges to determine how they could best support them. Managers support staff to develop the same skills in critical reflection.

Managers lead by example and role model positive practice, offering direct support to the child and the staff team. The child had high levels of staffing, requiring three to four carers each day. A staff team of only six carers and two managers worked at the home to ensure they supported the child consistently, picking up additional shifts to ensure the child was supported by people who knew them well. This exceptional commitment from staff helped the child to feel safe throughout an acutely distressing time.

Leaders and managers have high aspirations for staff and had equally high aspirations for the child. The staff team set regular goals with the child to support them to develop their own ambitions. Similarly, managers support the staff team to set their own goals to progress in their careers.

Managers support the team to develop their knowledge through relevant training sessions and regular workshops. Staff find team meetings and supervisions useful spaces for reflection and learning. These learning opportunities enable the team to better understand different needs and how to support children, and to further develop their skills to manage risk.

Managers have excellent oversight of practice in the home and make good use of internal and external monitoring. They consistently analysed staff practice to consider what was and was not helping the child. In addition, they support the staff team to develop their own skills and participate in the monitoring of the home and documents.

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: 2559317

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Omega Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: 40-42 Kemble Street, Prescot L34 5SQ

Responsible individual: Paul Seddon

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Aislinn Cooper, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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