

2584908

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for two children who have social and/or emotional difficulties or learning disabilities.

Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector met with both children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2025.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 October 2025

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 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2025	Full	Outstanding
20/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
11/01/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff are ambitious and aspirational for children. They encourage children to be active, recognising that a range of activities supports their emotional development, social skills and personal growth. One child attends youth club and has recently become a young youth leader. They also regularly marshal at local events. Another child has enjoyed paddleboarding and wild swimming and has attended music festivals. Both children have been on holiday through the summer. One child proudly talked about a recent trip with staff to watch his favourite football team. Colourful memory books contain photos of these experiences and provide children with wonderful memories of their time living at the home.

The staff value education for children and have high aspirations for their future. As a result, one child has achieved formal qualifications and improved confidence with their social skills. For another child, their overall experiences of education have improved considerably. The staff have excellent relationships with children's schools. This collaborative working contributes significantly to the sustained progress children make.

The staff are child centred and committed to the care and support of the children. Children can talk to staff about their worries and staff respond with nurture and acceptance. Staff support children to learn about different topics. Staff use research to underpin these conversations and approaches have been adapted for one child. The use of a communication toolkit has improved the child's ability to communicate effectively with staff. Staff build supportive and trusting relationships. The quality of these relationships significantly enhances children's lives.

Staff recognise the importance of children's family relationships and support children to spend time with those people who are important to them. They work collaboratively with children, family and professionals to ensure this time is carefully assessed, meaningful and safe. Staff are proactive in addressing any issues when they arise to ensure this time remains positive for children. Managers re-evaluate plans in line with the child's wishes to help ensure that children feel safe and secure. Family members show appreciation for the commitment from staff to supporting this time.

The home is a welcoming environment and nicely decorated throughout. The children have their own bedrooms and separate living spaces. These are personalised and both children have their own pets that they care for. The kitchen is the heart of the home and is where children and staff enjoy mealtimes together daily. Some rooms in the home are not accessible to the children, and the reasons for this are not always kept under review. The manager has identified where some restrictions can be removed and is taking action to achieve this.

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

The home provides a safe, secure and supportive environment where children feel protected and cared for. This is achieved through a combination of proactive safeguarding measures and thorough risk assessments. The staff have an excellent understanding of children's risks and how to keep children safe. The staff strive to understand children's behaviour and manage incidents well. They use relationship-based practice to form positive and trusting relationships. This helps children to feel safe and secure.

Care planning and risk management in the home are highly effective and result in significantly reduced risks for one child. Plans have clear guidance and strategies for staff and are regularly reviewed to take in key learning from incidents. Although there are still incidents for one child, these have reduced in severity, frequency and length. This is a direct result of the care, support and stability the home provides.

When a child has self-harmed, they have been able to identify triggers and seek support and connection from staff. Staff build positive, collaborative relationships with mental health professionals. This supports them to identify alternative strategies to support the child to reduce risk.

There have been some incidents when it has been necessary for staff to use physical intervention to keep a child safe. Incidents of restraint are proportionate to the risks for the child and well managed by staff. Staff have used agreed strategies in attempts to de-escalate and reduce risk in line with the child's plan. The manager reviews all incidents and ensures children can share their views. Reflective conversations with staff support wider learning and practice development. Incidents of restraint for one child have decreased significantly in length and frequency since moving to the home.

Staff support children to take age-appropriate risks. As a result, children are steadily developing their independence. They have increased time in the community alone and with friends. Both children have mobile phones. The staff understand the risks the internet may pose for children. They have robust parental controls and regularly check children's devices. The staff are proactive in ensuring conversations take place with children. This equips them with the knowledge and skills they need to navigate the digital world safely. Staff identify innovative and creative ways to inform these conversations. This includes the use of internet safety resources and research.

The home has a strong safeguarding culture. When a child raised a concern about staff practice, this was reported and shared with all relevant professionals and agencies in a timely manner. When the child was spoken to, they retracted the concern. Reflection and learning took place with staff. Relationships between the child and staff have been supported using restorative approaches.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager demonstrates strong and effective leadership. He is ambitious and highly committed to improving outcomes for children. The management team promotes a culture of high aspiration, positivity and continuous improvement. Despite being relatively new to their roles, managers have successfully maintained high standards of care.

The management team provides a supportive, empowering and aspirational environment for staff. The staff talk with positivity and pride about their experiences working in the home. They feel supported by the managers through high-quality supervisions and informative team meetings. The staff continuously assess how they can improve their practice through reflective conversations. Additionally, managers ensure specific, needs-led training is delivered by expert professionals. This helps to ensure the staff are well equipped and confident in their roles, contributing to the continued success of the home.

Managers are deeply committed to supporting and developing their staff. Their investment has empowered staff in their roles. As a result, staff independently access research to inform a wider understanding of children's needs. Practices have been adapted and improved in line with this. The commitment from managers has been central to the home's excellent staff retention. No staff have left since the last inspection, providing children with consistent and stable care.

Leaders and managers understand the home's strengths and areas for development. They recognise the significant progress children make. They are ambitious and creative when considering ways to enhance children's experiences. There are exceptional monitoring systems in place. These support the manager to have robust oversight of the home. Senior managers have excellent oversight of the home and provide additional support to the manager in his role.

A strength of the home is the relationships with external professionals, who are highly complimentary about the care children receive. One professional said, 'In all my years working with care homes, I have never seen this level of commitment to children. It really is outstanding.' Parents expressed satisfaction with the care and support for their children. One parent said, 'I can't fault them, they are outstanding, the care is outstanding. Since my child moved there, they are a different person. The help and support they give is amazing.' These strong partnerships enhance the quality of care provided. This ensures that the children's needs are met holistically.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any decision to restrict access to a particular room or rooms should be informed by a rigorous assessment of the individual child's needs and kept under review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 3.10)

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: 2584908

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Registered provider address: Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Responsible individual: Daniel Old

Registered manager: Christopher Hirons

Inspector

Carly Parry, Social Care Inspector

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