

2591643

Registered provider: Albrighton Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties and learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2024. She is working towards her level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 January 2025

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: 26 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child living at the home was present during the inspection and briefly spoke with the inspectors.

Since the previous inspection, two children have moved into the home and one child has moved out.

Leaders and staff have trusting relationships with children. The child living at the home told inspectors that they enjoy being around the adults, and that they make them laugh. The team has a strong understanding of the child's needs and of how to support them effectively. As a result, the child feels a sense of security in the home.

Children's moves both in and out of the home are well planned. Leaders carefully consider children's presenting risks in line with children who already live at the home. This has resulted in successful matching between children. Children are warmly welcomed into the home when they move in. Staff support children through regular discussions about how to live well together. This has led to children forming positive relationships and having better experiences in the home.

Staff encourage children to share regular feedback. Regular discussions take place with children to gain their views on the home. Children also choose their own meals and activities. One child was provided with the opportunity to rename the sensory room to the 'chill room'. As a result, the child living at the home is confident that their views will be listened to.

Staff support children to make wonderful progress with their education. Leaders appropriately challenged external professionals when there had been a lack of progress in finding an education placement for one child. This has resulted in a suitable provision being found for the child. They have made great progress and will be completing their mathematics and English awards.

Leaders and staff encourage children to attend regular health appointments. When one child struggled with their dental appointments, the staff team educated the child to understand how to improve their oral health. As a result, this child had a positive dental appointment which highlighted improvements from the previous visits. Children are supported to develop their personal care skills. One child has regularly been provided with information on how to attend to their personal care needs. The child who once had anxieties in relation to hair appointments is now more confident attending the hairdresser's due to staff's child-centred approach.

External professionals speak highly of staff's support. One professional said, 'The young person appears to have improved in self-confidence and engaging more since they started to live at the home.'

The physical conditions of the home are warm and child-centred. Children's voices are listened to by leaders and staff in relation to how they would like the home to look. Around the home, there are many positive affirmations and examples of children's work. For the child currently living at the home, their bedroom is unique to their taste, with posters of their favourite music artist. Their decor and furniture are modern. Leaders and staff provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for children.

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

Children say they feel safe and talk positively about the staff. This is a testament to the positive relationships children share with the adults looking after them.

Children's risk management plans are a source of clear guidance for staff. Staff know the children well; they also understand their responsibilities when safeguarding children. Risk management plans are shared and agreed with professionals to ensure that they remain relevant for the child. This has contributed to the low number of incidents in the home.

Staff have important discussions with children around online safety and how to keep themselves safe. There are effective systems in place to provide children with safer online experiences. Staff are confident that children know whom to speak to if they have concerns. Staff are not risk-averse and have taken a proportionate approach that is tailored to the ages of children when managing online systems.

The use of consequences is fair and effective. The manager and staff focus on implementing more natural approaches, which allows children to have the best opportunity to learn from behaviours. Children are involved in devising their own plans around positive behaviours and rewards and understand when consequences are implemented.

There have been no episodes of children going missing from the home. The home has a missing-from-care protocol in place in collaboration with local police. Staff are confident in how to respond should an incident take place.

Complaints in the home are minimal and are acted on promptly. However, when the child living in the home made a complaint, leaders failed to provide a written outcome to the child in line with the company's complaints policy. It was not clear to see how leaders had provided the child with an outcome of their concern.

The use of physical interventions is safe and proportionate and used as a last resort. Staff try to de-escalate behaviours using therapeutic measures before carrying out trained techniques. Staff record details of the incident in a timely manner. Children are also supported to reflect through regular debriefs. However, there have been three incidents where the manager has not reviewed the effectiveness of the measure used.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The staff team is led by an ambitious and motivated registered manager. She advocates on behalf of children and has a clear vision on the high ambitions that she would like children to achieve.

Staff feel well supported in their roles by the manager. Staff receive regular supervisions that are of a good quality. In supervisions, children's progression is routinely discussed, along with staff's individual development. Staff speak positively of the manager. One staff member said, 'She is one of the best I have ever known.'

Staff receive training in line with children's needs. The manager has sourced trauma-informed and autism training to support the child living in the home more effectively. Team meetings are regular, where children and their new identified behaviours are routinely discussed. Ways of working with children are shared using the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) model of care and other techniques. The manager has a strong oversight of staff's completion of training and, as a result, all staff are suitably trained.

Leaders work well with external professionals. Regular updates are shared about children when they occur. One professional said, 'Communication with the home is good. We receive weekly updates about how the young person is doing in placement.'

The recruitment of new staff is mostly carried out safely. However, on one occasion leaders had not explored why full dates of employment were not provided on a reference. It was not clear to see how managers had been assured that the staff member was fully suitable at the time of onboarding.

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 must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii))	18 February 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. In particular, leaders and staff should follow the full procedures outlined in the policy for complaints. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20).
- The registered person should ensure that they maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, leaders should ensure that when recruiting new staff, all dates of employment are gained by the referee. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2591643

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Albrighton Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 15 Heritage Park, Hayes Way, Cannock WS11 7LT

Responsible individual: Kerry Hutchinson

Registered manager: Cassandra Pinder

Inspectors

Chanel Bryant, Social Care Inspector
Julia Tompson, Social Care Inspector

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