

2599388

Registered provider: Willows21 Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider. It provides care for up to 4 children who may have emotional or social difficulties. At the time of the inspection, 3 children were living at the home.

In addition to the main home, there is an annexe building that can be used to help prepare a child for a move to independence. One child was living in the annexe at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2023.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2026

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: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Good
06/02/2024	Full	Good
06/12/2022	Full	Good
23/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children were living in the home at the time of inspection. The children have built trusted relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff listen to them as well as investing time in getting to know them.

Relationship building is prioritised in the home, and staff consistently follow a child-centred approach. Children speak positively about the staff team and say they feel happy, safe and well cared for. Interactions between staff and children demonstrate warmth, sensitivity and nurture.

There are numerous photos around the home of children enjoying holidays, weekend breaks and seasonal activities such as visits to Christmas markets.

The secure and trusting relationships between children and staff contribute to children making meaningful progress from their individual starting points. One child chose to share a personal letter from the foster family caring for her son and felt confident seeking staff guidance on how to respond in a positive and constructive way.

Children attend school consistently. attendance is around 78%. One child is due to begin an apprenticeship at a local nursery and will attend college one day per week to take the associated qualification. Another child is on a structured work experience placement in a hairdressing salon, with a plan to progress to college to take a hair and beauty course.

Staff are proactive in supporting children's achievements and development. They maintain high aspirations and provide effective guidance, ensuring that children are supported to progress and achieve.

Staff support children to spend time with their family and develop and maintain relationships with those people who are important to them. However, concerns regarding one child spending time with their parent have not been escalated robustly.

Staff support children to attend health appointments. However, staff should educate children in more depth about their health and wellbeing. This includes helping children understand positive behaviours and, where needed, supporting them to change negative ones.

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

A strong safeguarding culture is embedded in the home, which promotes the safety and wellbeing of children. Staff understand their role in safeguarding. There is clear communication with partner agencies such as local authorities in response to any

concerns. When children raise concerns, staff act to keep them safe and children are kept informed throughout including receiving a response to their concern.

Children accept the boundaries in place. The safe and open culture means children share concerns with staff. This approach enables children to develop their independence. Staff demonstrate to children that they are important, and children trust that staff will respond to their needs. This helps children feel safer and supports them to develop a feeling of belonging.

There have been some incidents when children have gone missing from home. Staff response is swift and prompt action is taken to locate children. Staff try to locate the children, working with their families and external professionals. Children are welcomed home and staff show concern for their wellbeing. If there are concerns about risks, staff respond appropriately. This includes effective communication with other professionals to consider how to support children to reduce the risks they face.

Allegations about staff practice are responded to promptly. Leaders and managers ensure that all relevant professionals, including safeguarding partners such as the local authority designated officer (LADO), are notified so that processes remain transparent and subject to independent scrutiny. However, on one occasion when an allegation was made, a member of staff was transferred to another home during the investigation. No risk assessment was completed to justify this decision or to demonstrate how children's safety would be assured.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is well led by a manager who is child focused and advocates for children with the commitment of a 'good parent'. This ethos is followed by the staff team, who provide children with nurturing care and genuine affection.

Staff describe a positive team culture in which they feel supported. Regular supervision and access to training mean that staff have the knowledge and skills required to meet children's needs.

Staff know the children well and how to keep them safe. They speak with passion about the roles they play in improving children's lives and can explain clearly what the focus is for each child, to meet their needs and ensure that they experience positive outcomes.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. They are reflective and provide a platform for staff to explore and review children's progress. There is a strong focus on providing consistency in the care and support that children receive.

Recruitment processes are safe, robust and thorough. All necessary checks are completed before staff start work at the home, ensuring their suitability to work with children. The staff team is diverse and the culture in the home promotes equality and diversity.

External professionals and family members are positive about the care children receive. They highlight effective partnership working, strong advocacy and communication as strengths of the home.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and wellbeing to enhance and supplement that provided by their school through personal, social and health education (PSHE). Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change, negative behaviours in key areas of health and wellbeing such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

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: 2599388

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Willows21 Limited

Registered provider address: Old Farmhouse, Gussage St Michael, Wimborne, Dorset
BH21 5JE

Responsible individual: Carolyn Coombes

Registered manager: Zoe Smith

Inspector

Darren Wickens, Social Care Inspector

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