

2641044

Registered provider: Action For Children Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a charity. It provides care for up to 4 children who have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2021.

There were 4 children living in the home at the time of the inspection. Three were spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 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: 20 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/05/2025	Full	Good
28/05/2024	Full	Good
06/06/2023	Full	Good
25/04/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Leaders and managers support children to make good progress and have good experiences in the home. This progress can be seen in children's education, placement stability and their emotional wellbeing. Children's family members and professionals speak positively about the care that children receive.

Overall, children are kept safe, with few concerns regarding external risks such as exploitation or children going missing. However, staff need to complete more timely work with children to address relationship issues and reduce incidents of bullying when they happen.

Leaders and managers are aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. They work well with other agencies to meet the needs of children. Staff are well supported in their roles.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Most children in the home have lived there for a long time. They are making good progress and have positive experiences. Staff develop strong relationships with children's family members, which supports children's identity and promotes placement stability. Children speak positively about living in the home and about the staff that care for them.

Children receive individualised care in line with their needs. Staff have supported one child to achieve good evening routines and sleep patterns. Another child who has experienced significant previous instability in their life is benefiting from consistent care from a resilient staff team, and this has contributed to the child living at the home longer than they have in any previous placement.

Staff work well with external professionals such as social workers, teachers and mental health professionals. This allows a multi-agency approach to care, which helps ensure that children's needs are met.

All children attend school regularly. Staff help children to overcome barriers to attendance by working with them and providing consistent messaging. This helps children engage with their education and make progress in their learning.

Children's bedrooms are well presented and personalised. However, not all children have a lockable secure space in their room to keep their possessions safe. One child had items taken from their room recently, which may have been able to be prevented had they had such facilities.

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

Children are kept safe and they rarely go missing from home. On the occasions children have gone missing, staff work in line with agreed plans and liaise effectively with other professionals such as police and social workers. This helps to ensure that children are located quickly and safely.

When allegations are made against staff, the manager takes clear action to address any concerns. Children are safeguarded throughout this process, and their views are clearly gathered. The manager also works with external professionals to gather further information and evaluate risks effectively. Any necessary actions that are identified are taken promptly.

Children are only held when it is necessary to ensure that they and others are safe. Managers have good oversight of these incidents. Children are spoken with and offered advocacy when they have been held, ensuring that their views are sought and responded to. This allows managers to undertake effective evaluations that inform future practice.

Staff support children to understand appropriate behaviours. They implement restorative consequences when needed and speak to the children following any behavioural incidents to gain further understanding of what may have led to these. This restorative approach ensures that children understand their actions and are supported to make positive changes going forward.

Staff respond appropriately to bullying by keeping children safe and preventing further unwanted behaviours. However, staff are not consistently working in a targeted way with children following incidents, or when there are emerging patterns of bullying. This means that opportunities may be missed to provide effective interventions and reduce future incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager knows the home well and has a good understanding of the children's needs. She operates effective processes for maintaining oversight and leadership in the home and has high expectations for the children and staff. Staff and external professionals speak very positively about the manager and the overall leadership of the home.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff provide care in line with the home's stated aims. Staff work closely with therapeutic practitioners who provide regular consultations for staff and training in line with children's needs. This allows staff to understand children's therapeutic care needs and provide them with emotionally attuned care.

Leaders and managers ensure that team meetings are held regularly. This allows staff to share knowledge and good practice. Representatives from the police and mental health services have worked with staff to provide additional specialist training and support. This

helps to ensure that staff can continue to develop their practice and improve the care they provide to children.

Staff receive regular good-quality supervision to support them in their respective roles. These provide opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and consider how effectively they are meeting children's needs. However, not all staff have received annual appraisals. This means that the manager is missing opportunities to monitor practice and promote staff development.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xii)(xiii))	19 June 2026
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	19 June 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children are provided with appropriate furniture, such as a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.19)

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: 2641044

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Action For Children Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Action for Children, 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG

Responsible individual: Barbara Bolam

Registered manager: Rachel Matthewson

Inspector

Jon Collins, Social Care Inspector

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