

2641888

Registered provider: Acorn Norfolk Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to five children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

It is operated by a national provider.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

The home is in the grounds of an independent school and seven other children's homes, which are all operated by the same provider.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this school.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 November 2024

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: 27 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2023	Full	Good
26/04/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection; all of the children were spoken to. Since the last inspection, two children have moved out. One child had an unplanned ending following a family move. When children move out of the home, staff usually help settle them into their new homes. This helps children to experience positive moves.

Children's health is promoted through a good diet, plenty of sleep and healthy emotional well-being. The children are registered with appropriate health agencies and accompanied by family and staff to appointments when appropriate. The children have extensive access to a therapeutic team that specialises in supporting children's emotional well-being and providing therapeutic support to the team. Additionally, staff receive specialist training to recognise and manage children's low mood and emerging behavioural changes. As a result, staff are confident in their responses to the children's overall well-being.

Children enjoy a warm and nurturing home. Staff show how much they care for the children. They provide activities that are designed to engage and stimulate learning and provide children with new opportunities. A parent said, 'The staff are good at getting him to engage in stuff he didn't do prior to coming to the home.'

Staff enjoy collating memory books for children to take with them when they leave. These books capture the trips, activities and holidays they have enjoyed during their time at the home. These provide children with lasting mementos and memories. One child regularly looks at her memory book. Staff said that this helps her if she feels anxious.

The feedback from parents and professionals is very positive. They said that the strengths of the home are the wonderful relationships they have with the staff. One parent said the staff made the difference between 'it being ok and not ok' that their child does not live with them. They also said their child was doing things that they would never do when they were living with them, as staff have the additional skills to support the child.

Staff are incredibly inventive in gathering the voice of the child throughout the course of the day. They use mixed communication methods, including emojis, choice boards, feelings cards and widgets. Children willingly contribute to key-work sessions that are tailored to their specific communication styles. Staff are able to provide clear examples of children making choices that impact on the development of the home.

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

There is a comprehensive training plan to ensure that staff are confident in their understanding of and reporting child protection concerns. Staff complete additional specialised training that addresses children's individual needs. Staff said that they appreciate the opportunities they have to learn how to be better carers.

There are times when children are restrained. This is used reasonably and proportionately in order to avoid harm to the child or others. Staff talk to children about restraint, as they do not want them to be frightened. Staff use as little restraint as they can during incidents and always have conversations with children afterwards to check they understand what has happened. These conversations help repair any damage to relationships. A parent said, 'I know that staff really consider being physical with my child. They are keeping him safe as far as I am concerned.'

All staff are first aid trained and complete regular training to ensure they have the skills and confidence to work with children who may have complex health needs.

There is a clear missing-from-home policy and guidance for staff to follow. Missing-from-home episodes are rare but managed well and carefully documented. Risk assessments provide staff with clear direction on steps they should take when children go missing. Staff feel confident and know how to manage any missing-from-home incidents.

Children are shown how to make complaints. Staff offer the opportunity to do this in regular key-work sessions.

There is a consistent core staff team. All the children benefit from one-to-one support. When necessary, staff support children at a higher ratio. Children benefit from a high level of supervision in the home and the community by staff who know them well and can anticipate their needs. At times, the manager works at weekends so that children can enjoy specific activities that need a higher number of staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified to manage the home. She registered with Ofsted in January 2022. A confident deputy manager plays an active role in the home's day-to-day management. Staff are highly positive about the managers, saying that they enjoy working at the home and feel that managers are approachable and supportive.

Staff are very enthusiastic about the manager. They said her responses to children's needs are solution focused. These show her commitment and dedication to the children. She is a strong advocate on behalf of the children and a strong role model for the staff and children alike. The responsible individual and manager have developed a strong relationships. There is a positive team dynamic that is praised by staff.

Managers have increased monitoring and oversight to identify patterns and trends in behaviour. The home benefits from strong partnerships with social care and education providers. A social worker said, 'When children have been home for visits, staff provide good-quality reports about emotional well-being prior to and after the visit.'

Staff receive nationally recognised training that helps to increase their knowledge and skills further. However, one member of staff has not achieved a level 3 diploma within two years of commencing a care role. Unfortunately, the training provider has withdrawn their services in this area. The provider has commissioned a registered training company, and it is anticipated that the staff member will restart the course imminently.

Managers use the visits from the independent person as an effective audit tool. This is helping them identify learning and improve the quality of care provided. The independent person was visiting the home at the time of the inspection. She praised the individualised care the children receive and said staff and children have close and caring relationships.

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
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	25 March 2025

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: 2641888

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Acorn Norfolk Limited

Registered provider address: Atria, Spa Road, Bolton BL1 4AG

Responsible individual: Jaya Wright

Registered manager: Kirsty Orton-Kabanzi

Inspector

Trudy Potter, Social Care Inspector

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