

2647767

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to 3 children with social and emotional difficulties. The home provides medium- to long-term care on a planned basis and in an emergency.

The home was registered with Ofsted in October 2021. The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

At the time of the inspection, 2 children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 February 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 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/06/2024	Full	Good
03/05/2023	Full	Good
18/10/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There have been recent changes, with new children moving in. Children are still adjusting to these changes, supported closely by staff. Staff are working hard to ensure that they listen to children throughout this period of change. When children raise concerns, staff take them seriously and make changes where possible.

Children benefit from well-planned moves into the home. Plans are individual to the children's needs. All children living in the home are part of the planning process. This way of working helps all children to feel listened to and valued when changes are happening. Small steps are taken to introduce children to each other gradually. This includes meeting for activities before moves happen to help children get to know each other. Staff work closely with the child's previous placement to help ensure that their move is as smooth as possible.

Children live in a home where there is a focus on positivity and fun. Children enjoy good relationships with staff who know them exceptionally well. Staff spend quality time with children. They invest in children's life journeys, including standing by them when things get hard.

Children's education is a priority. Some children achieve qualifications, and staff support them well to explore options for the next stage of their education. For other children, they are engaging in bespoke education to support their current needs. One educational professional commented, 'They are always supportive, communication is fantastic. They always support the child in what they want to do.'

Children are encouraged to stay fit and well. They participate in a range of activities that help them to stay fit, such as trampolining, playing football and going on bike rides. For children who need more support with their emotional wellbeing, the staff help them to engage with specialist services. One specialist mental health professional commented, 'We work together and plan together to support the child's needs. They genuinely care.'

The staff try and give children as much choice as they can about how they would like to take their medication. However, the individual arrangements for administering medication are not fully reflected in children's plans. This lack of recording does not provide clear expectations for staff to ensure that arrangements for administering medication are always safe and effective.

Children preparing to move on are learning skills that will help them to be independent in later life. Skills they learn include budgeting and general housekeeping tasks such as washing laundry, shopping and cooking. Children like to cook meals for themselves, and they also learn how to cook group meals for everyone in the house.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's vulnerabilities. Children's individual risk assessments offer a range of positive strategies to help staff reduce and manage risks for the children.

There is a positive approach to managing any challenges, and children respond well to praise and rewards systems that are individualised to their age and needs. Clear routines and boundaries help children to feel safe. Physical intervention is a last resort. Staff use low-level holds for the minimum time necessary to keep children safe.

When children go missing from home, the staff take immediate action to try and find the child. Steps they take include looking for the child and contacting friends, family and relevant professionals such as the police. When children return, the staff make sure they have the chance to speak to an independent person. This provides the opportunity to gather information that could help reduce future risks. One professional commented, 'Staff demonstrate a genuine commitment to the wellbeing of the young people. They show good insight into each child's needs and provide relevant background information. When exploring risk factors or patterns around missing-from-home episodes, staff work collaboratively to plan safety strategies.'

Children learn how to keep themselves safe. Meaningful learning sessions help them recognise potential dangers. These sessions include work on the risks associated with going missing from home and self-harm. Some sessions for older children are delivered by specialist external professionals to help them understand risks related to exploitation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is dedicated and child focused. He prioritises creating a sense of belonging and stability in children's lives, which for some is a first-time experience. The registered manager is well supported by a deputy manager and a staff team that mirrors his approach.

Staff feel well supported by the registered manager and the deputy. Staff receive regular supervision that helps them to reflect on their work with the children. Staff have yearly appraisals that help them to evaluate their work, and they set targets for the year ahead. This meets a recommendation set at the last inspection.

The registered manager has effective monitoring systems that enable them to oversee both children's progress and the quality of the service. They use 6-monthly reports to analyse children's experiences and set targets to support ongoing service improvement. This meets the recommendation set at the last inspection.

However, the independent visitor's reports do not fully support the registered manager in monitoring the effectiveness of care. The reports do not consistently include the views of professionals or other key people involved in the children's lives. This lack of consultation

means the reports do not provide a thorough or impartial view of children's experiences or safety.

Staff receive a range of training to give them the skills they need to care for children. In addition, some additional learning around children's needs is delivered in sessions by the company's specialist psychotherapist.

The registered manager has excellent relationships with other professionals. This ensures that there are strong multi-agency networks in place to support children's complex needs. He works closely with the virtual schools, specialist mental health services and medical professionals. The registered manager advocates for the children to make sure professionals deliver the services children need. One professional commented, 'I am impressed with them. They communicate well and join all meetings. They really understand the child's needs.'

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 an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, to ensure that thorough and impartial assessment includes consultation with professionals and others involved in children's lives.	30 April 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. These are fundamentally the same sorts of arrangements as a good parent would make but are subject to additional safeguards. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35 paragraph 7.15)

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: 2647767

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Woodford Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 37B Chipstead Valley Rd, Coulsdon, Croydon CR5 2RB

Responsible individual: Carmel Willis

Registered manager: Terry Gerbaldi

Inspector

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector

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