

2650950

Registered provider: Alternative Approach Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a small private company. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 August 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: 19 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/04/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive and nurturing relationships with the adults who are responsible for their care. Although the staff team has changed, new staff have been gradually introduced to prevent any disruption in the children's lives. The registered manager and senior team leader work alongside all new staff to model what good care looks like. This is also used as an opportunity to reiterate the expectations for staff in safely caring for each child.

Both children have made significant progress from their starting points. The registered manager and staff team have a good knowledge and understanding of the children's individual needs. They listen to children, protect them and promote their welfare. This is evident in all areas of children's lives.

Children's wishes and feelings are listened to and acted on. Children gave examples of requests they have made, including a holiday abroad, a new barbecue, decoration in the home and trips to a variety of places.

Children are supported to understand their family history, background and culture. Staff seek appropriate resources for children to follow their cultural and religious beliefs. Staff attend religious ceremonies with children when they request, and they help them to celebrate and recognise religious festivals. This supports children's identities.

The children are in good health, and staff actively encourage and support them to attend health appointments. Staff think creatively when children do not want to attend appointments. They seek the support of health professionals, which includes health professionals visiting the home to talk to children. This proactive approach has encouraged a child to access healthcare that they have previously refused. All children's healthcare needs are detailed in their individual plans.

Children access a range of activities inside and outside of the home. For some, this has included new experiences, such as trips abroad, sunset walks and trips to the countryside. This has helped children to develop a sense of belonging and create new memories.

Staff understand the importance of children keeping in touch with their friends and families, and they support them to do this in line with their care plans. Staff maintain good communication with children's families. One family member said, 'Staff keep me updated and send me a weekly report. This helps me stay involved in my child's life.'

Care documents are personalised to each child and include the views of children and their progress and experiences. When children speak English as an additional language, their care plans are written in dual language. This helps all children to feel valued.

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

The staff are proactive and tenacious in their safeguarding of children. Relevant information is consistently shared with safeguarding professionals when children go missing from home. This means that the placing authority is fully informed in their decision-making and consideration of the safety of the child.

Warm and caring relationships were observed between the children and staff. Children said that they have staff to talk to if they are worried or upset. They said that the registered manager 'always does something about it' if they tell her something. This contributes to children's well-being and security.

The registered manager and staff team understand children's needs, risks and vulnerabilities. Risk management plans are detailed so that the staff know the strategies to follow to keep children safe. The staff confidently demonstrate a very clear understanding of the procedures to follow if there are any safeguarding concerns and how they should respond.

The registered manager and staff deal with behaviours that challenge safely and effectively. Staff are caring and nurturing in their approach to children. Physical intervention techniques are only used as a last resort, with only one incident since the last inspection. Consequences are used to help children understand about unacceptable behaviours. However, records do not demonstrate that consequences are consistently restorative in nature or include the full details of what is being imposed on children.

Medication practice needs strengthening. Some records have not been completed to show the administration of a drug in prescribed amounts and at prescribed intervals. This does not ensure that children are not over or under medicated. Audits have not identified the shortfalls in medication practices.

The registered manager maintains good employment practice. However, safer recruitment records do not include all relevant information. This means that there are shortfalls in the steps taken to ensure that all adults recruited into the organisation are suitable and appropriate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has worked in the home for over six months and has made a significant difference in this time. The registered manager is dynamic and suitably qualified to manage the home. Since working in the home, she has consistently provided creative and enabling leadership to a committed staff team.

The registered manager ensures that she is present in the home and accessible to children and staff. She talks about the children with warmth and enthusiasm and is a strong advocate for them. The staff share the enthusiasm of the registered manager.

They say that morale is good and that they love working at the home. This contributes to a positive culture in the home.

Staff receive regular supervision. They say that this helps them to reflect on their performance and improve the quality of care that they provide. The registered manager identifies training and development needs for the team and ensures that these are reflected in supervision. However, not all staff have completed the required qualification within the expected time frame or undertaken all mandatory training courses.

Staff rotas do not include the exact hours that the manager works. This is necessary because it could impact on day-to-day arrangements in the home. A recommendation has been made to reflect this shortfall.

Staff maintain good-quality records which capture each child's life in detail. All pertinent information is shared in a timely way with relevant stakeholders. This ensures that all parties understand each child's life, experiences and plans for the future.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered manager must ensure that all staff have the relevant training to support them in their roles.	27 September 2024
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. 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—	27 September 2024

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. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c))	27 September 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and staff caring for them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 2650950

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Alternative Approach Care limited.

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Inward Way, Rossmore Business Village,
Ellesmere Port CH65 3EY

Responsible individual: Michael Jeffs

Registered manager: Leah Scholes

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, Senior His Majesty's Inspector
Nicola Rutherford, Social Care Inspector

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