

2668686

Registered provider: AMMA Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and registered to provide care for up to 3 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The suitably qualified manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 January 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 8 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2024	Full	Good
17/10/2023	Full	Good
20/09/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children's experiences and progress have been affected by shortfalls in safeguarding practice and leadership and management. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. Since the previous inspection, one child moved in and then left, and 2 other children also left.

Planning for one child's move into the home was inconsistent. While some of the child's individual needs and risks were assessed, a significant risk was overlooked. This meant that the needs of all children were not fully considered, leading to difficulties in the relationships within the home.

One child's move from the home was positive and well supported. However, 2 children experienced unplanned endings under challenging circumstances. Leaders and managers did not take sufficient action to reduce the likelihood of these outcomes. Consequently, children do not always have positive endings when leaving the home.

Children are supported in their education and make progress from their starting points. One child achieved GCSE results above expectations, enabling them to access a post-16 course aligned with their career plans. Feedback from schools and colleges is consistently positive. One teacher commented, 'We have a very good working relationship with the home. They are good at sharing information.'

Staff support children with their emotional wellbeing. However, when one child experienced acute mental health difficulties, staff and managers did not seek urgent medical attention. This meant that the child's immediate health needs were not addressed. Managers had not identified this shortfall.

Staff are trained in the therapeutic model of care used at this home, but this is not always evidenced in practice. Some of the language used in the records and documents for children is not in line with the home's therapeutic approach. In addition, children's achievements are not consistently recognised or rewarded. This does not promote positive behaviour, dignity and respect.

Children live in a cosy and homely environment. Staff support them to personalise their bedrooms. Photographs of children taking part in activities are on display around the home. The garden is child friendly and well maintained.

Staff build some positive relationships with children and professionals are generally positive about the support provided. One parent said, 'They treat my child with 100% love and care.'

Staff support children to spend time with people who are important to them. Managers and staff work with families and professionals so that the time children spend with their family is safe and positive. When concerns arise, the manager acts promptly to address them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The home has experienced a period of instability due to staff not having the skills to appropriately support children when they are upset or angry. Staff have frequently called the police to support them when children are unsettled. On one occasion, a child was removed from the home by police. The manager has not taken sufficient action to reduce reliance on police support.

Staff have guidance to help them support children appropriately. They usually take immediate action to keep children safe from harm. However, guidance for staff is not always updated with emerging risks. This means that staff do not have clear enough strategies to support children's wellbeing. On one occasion, this led to a child leaving the home at night unknown to staff, which put the child at risk. On another occasion, staff did not follow agreed plans for a child's time in the community. During this time, the child was assaulted by a peer. The manager did not identify these shortfalls when reviewing these incidents. This is a missed opportunity to improve staff practice and safeguard children effectively.

Staff understand the risks that the internet may pose for children. They have recognised the risks posed to one child by their internet use and shared their concerns with professionals. However, the manager did not put in place effective strategies to manage that risk. This means that the child continued to be at potential risk of harm from their internet use during their time in the home.

Consequences are used frequently but are not always restorative or recorded appropriately. Oversight by the manager is inconsistent, and records are not always child centred. This means that consequences can be punitive.

Staff understand the risk of exploitation and take action to keep children safe. Staff respond promptly when children go missing, resulting in them generally returning home quickly. While staff and children are always spoken with after these incidents, children have not been offered independent return home interviews.

When children raise concerns about staff practice, these are taken seriously and shared with the appropriate agencies. Strategies are put in place to keep children safe. However, these strategies are not always clear and up to date in children's plans. This does not support staff to know what they need to do to keep children safe. Children are not consistently updated on outcomes or supported to repair relationships.

Incidents of physical intervention have reduced. When staff use physical intervention, this is in appropriate circumstances and to prevent serious harm. Children are spoken to after interventions are used.

Leaders, managers and staff recognise that the behaviour management system used by the home does not always help them to keep children safe. They are in the process of commissioning a new programme to support staff and children in this area.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There have been changes to the management team since the last inspection, including a new deputy manager and responsible individual. The responsible individual has identified areas for improvement and introduced monitoring systems. The deputy manager is supporting staff to implement new recording systems. These changes are at an early stage.

The manager knows the children well and has a positive relationship with external professionals. She usually advocates effectively for children. However, staffing levels for one child were reduced without clear rationale, despite high risks. This contributed to the child moving out of the home in an unplanned way. The manager has since reflected on this period and completed a lessons-learned review to identify what could be done differently in the future.

The manager has monitoring tools in place, but they do not always identify how the quality of care for children could be improved. The manager has tracking systems in place to monitor staff training. However, these are not effective. For example, the manager was unsure about some of the training that staff had attended and training records were not up to date. This means that it was unclear if staff had had training to meet children's specific needs. Some staff are out of statutory timescales to complete their qualification, although action has been taken to address this.

Staff say that they like working in the home and feel well supported. Staff and managers receive regular and effective supervision, which is focused on children's needs. Team meetings happen regularly and are usually child focused. However, significant incidents are not always discussed. This means that there have been missed opportunities to address staff practice and learn from significant incidents in the home.

The home is properly staffed to meet the needs of children, and staff are safely recruited. There have been some significant changes in the staff team that, at times, have impacted upon children. When one child complained about a staffing change, the manager responded promptly and sensitively to their complaint.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))	5 March 2026

In particular, the registered person must ensure that appropriate measures are in place for staff to reduce and mitigate risk to children. In addition, ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and have the skills to protect children and prevent them and staff being harmed.	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(e) (2)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))	5 March 2026

In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff deliver care in line with the home's statement of purpose. They must ensure that staff have up-to-date plans to provide children with continuity of care and keep them safe from harm. Leaders and managers must ensure that management oversight is robust and effective.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that consequences are restorative and proportionate and that children are spoken with about the consequence. The registered	5 March 2026

person must also ensure that there is management oversight of consequences.	
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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: 2668686

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: AMMA Childcare Services

Registered provider address: Unit 507b Jq Modern, 120 Vyse Street, Hockley, Birmingham B18 6NF

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Catherine Mitten

Inspector

Jenny Smith, Social Care Inspector

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