

2681311

Registered provider: Abbey Green Therapeutic Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care for one child. The home offers specialist therapeutic care for a child who has experienced trauma and may display behaviours that are challenging.

The home is led by a registered manager. He is moving to another home in the organisation, and an experienced manager is in the process of registering with Ofsted for this home. Both the current registered manager and the new manager were present for the inspection.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 February 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection, and care.

Date of last inspection: 6 September 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the previous inspection, a child has successfully transitioned to another home as part of a care plan progression. This was due to significant work completed with the child to support them to live in a shared living arrangement. Another child has moved in to the home from an unregistered setting. The provider has previously looked after this child and has maintained that connection and continuity for them.

Children experience excellent outcomes. The child who has moved on from the home has made exceptional progress from their starting point. An advocate spoke about the huge risk reduction for the child, who had previously been living in a secure setting. The advocate described the child as coming on in 'leaps and bounds'. A parent said, 'I couldn't have wished for my child to be anywhere else better. [Name of child] was loved and kept safe, and staff couldn't do enough for them.'

Children benefit from exceptionally strong and trusting relationships with carers. The child currently living at the home gave the home 'eight out of 10'. He has settled quickly and the turnaround for him has been exceptional. A social worker said, '[Name of child] is doing amazing. It is clear he is feeling safe and secure, his pull factor is to the home and his missing-from-care episodes have reduced drastically. I no longer worry about him.'

Planning for the child who moved on from the home was incredibly thoughtful and sensitively managed. Staff understand the bigger picture of care planning for children. Managers advocate for children's care plans to be progressed. For one child, this has meant the therapy team working closely with the family and child in supporting family dynamics. This has progressed and helped to work towards positive and improved outcomes for the child.

Staff support children to quickly feel safe and invested in the home. Where children experience challenges in keeping their environment safe and comfortable, staff understand the barriers to this. Staff work closely with the therapy team to ensure that children are swiftly helped to keep their environment safe and homely. Children feel invested in the home.

Staff help children to achieve significantly improved educational outcomes from their starting points. Staff use their excellent relationships with children to encourage them to progress in education. For one child, a phased return to education led to them having over 96% attendance. A tutor said, 'academically they have done really well. Staff at the home were amazing. Communication with education was exceptional.' Staff supported the child in education practically, and attended sessions with the tutor. Staff go above and beyond to ensure that children are engaged and benefiting from bespoke education plans.

As a result of the home's strong therapeutic ethos, children's emotional well-being is prioritised. Because of this, children have a better understanding of the emotions and feelings they experience. This enables children to better moderate their feelings and gain control over their emotions. Staff offer sensory modulation techniques integrated with behaviour management strategies to support children. Staff supported one child well to sustain important connections. Since the current child moved in to the home, they have been reunited with a therapist who has previously worked with the child and knows the child well. This has helped the child to settle quickly into the home.

Staff's knowledge of the children has helped to inform assessments and access services in a timely manner. Staff supported a child with a medical assessment and subsequent diagnosis. A health lead professional reported that the child was receiving appropriate emotional and social support from staff. Staff advocate for child and mental health service support running alongside their own therapeutic support team. This leads to excellent emotional health and well-being support for the child.

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

Staff use their relationships with the child, as well as their skills and experience, to maintain a positive atmosphere in the home. This helps to keep incidents to a minimum. Staff provide consistent boundaries to promote positive behaviour.

Managers follow the principles of safer recruitment practice, which helps to ensure that unsuitable people do not have contact with children. There is no use of agency staffing support, which means that children receive care and support from staff who they know and trust.

Managers review and monitor physical interventions, meaning that there is good oversight. Where there have been incidents of physical intervention, there is a positive approach to review and reduce physical interventions. Overall, there has been a reduction in the use of physical interventions for children. Staff are utilising a variety of de-escalation and alternative approaches to manage behaviours. Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort.

Knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures are sound. Leaders and managers ensure that in the event that an allegation is made by a child, they refer it to the appropriate safeguarding professionals. This enables a full investigation in a timely way. There is evidence of strong working relationships with the police and social care. Managers record outcomes of safeguarding concerns and take action to ensure that children and staff are supported throughout safeguarding processes. Managers take children's concerns seriously, and take steps to help to prevent them from being at risk of harm.

Children's risks are well known and understood. Staff support children to reduce incidents of risk. The holistic and individualised support given to one child helped them to have a significant reduction in incidents of self-harm, going missing from

care, and physical interventions. Positive connections and holistic interventions have led to reduced restrictions. For one child, this led to restrictions being reduced as part of a deprivation of liberty order.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The dedicated and passionate managers are making a difference to children's lives. The departing manager has ensured that there is good management oversight of the home and has robust checks and balances in place. The new manager is equally committed and dedicated to securing positive outcomes for the child. Both managers are experienced. Managers understand the needs of the service, the strengths, and areas for development. There is an excellent transition and positive working relationship between the registered manager and incoming manager.

There have been some changes in the staff team. This has been a natural progression, and most staff who have moved on from the home have progressed into roles within the organisation. Despite these changes, there has been a core group of staff that have enabled children to experience stability and consistency in care. Managers support staff to develop their skills.

Staff are receiving regular supervisions. Staff report to feeling well supported. They have regular opportunities to share any concerns and they are benefiting from group reflective discussions. Managers are aware that the quality of individual reflective supervision could be strengthened.

Training is effective and bespoke to the needs of the child living at the home at any one time. Training is focused on upskilling staff to meet individual children's needs. For example, staff have received training on sensory processing. The staff team receives input and support from a therapeutic support team. However, it is not clear in records if all staff have received the detailed therapeutic training that is stipulated in the home's statement of purpose. The operational manager is currently reviewing this.

Communication between the home and other agencies is highly effective. Other professionals report that leaders and managers are proactive in the sharing of information. This ensures positive working-together arrangements.

The recording of information could be smarter and more focused. This is across the board, from incident reports, regulation 45 reports, and the training matrix.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2681311

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Abbey Green Therapeutic Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 51 Abbey Green Road, Leek ST13 8SA

Responsible individual: Michael Stanway

Registered manager: Avgoustinos Demetriou

Inspectors

Bev Allison, Social Care Inspector

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