

2698124

Registered provider: SWAAY Child & Adolescent Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care for up to five children who require specialist support and therapeutic intervention. It is owned and run by a private organisation. The service offers an integrated education and therapeutic programme. At the time of the inspection, there were three children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2023. The manager was not present during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2025

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	requires improvement to be 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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make significant progress living at this home. Staff have helped the children become more independent. The children are happy and settled and have plentiful opportunities to have fun and pursue their hobbies and interests. Some of the children look after pets, while one older child has demonstrated the trust and responsibility required to allow them to spend time in the home without staff present.

Dedicated staff ensure that the home is well maintained and thoughtfully decorated. The children's contributions to the appearance of the home are proudly displayed. The children can personalise their rooms, and their living spaces exude personality.

Staff promote the children's education. Most of the children attend school full time and are being helped to prepare for GCSEs. The children have clear ambitions for their futures and staff help them to achieve their goals. Staff take the children to visit local colleges, helping the children to make informed choices about the next stages of their education.

Staff work sensitively to support the children in the home. These children are negotiating complex family and social relationships. Staff have open and frank conversations with the children, which helps them to work through challenging circumstances. Staff encourage the children to maintain their connections with families through their cultural backgrounds or shared faith. Subsequently, the children's confidence in managing relationships independently has grown.

Children's individual communication needs are well understood by staff, who adapt their approach to communicating with the children accordingly. Staff have used communication aids to help one child understand important changes in their lives. This has been particularly effective in reducing the number of times the child has become distressed.

Children have enriching experiences in the local community. Staff have had success in motivating children into participating in charity initiatives such as fundraising 'mud runs' and volunteering at foodbanks. The children have also applied for their first jobs and contributed to plans for a holiday together.

Staff help the children to create memory books, which capture the children's activities and experiences during their time at the home. The children take these with them when they move on, which allows them to reflect on their journey and self-development.

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

Staff have not always taken effective action to promptly ensure the children's safety and well-being. For example, there was a delay in one staff member sharing a conduct concern with managers. On another occasion, staff did not seek appropriate medical advice when a child alleged to have been the victim of an assault in the community.

Managers' investigations into staff conduct have been inconsistent. On one occasion, appropriate action was taken by managers in response to a concern, and lessons learned had been shared with the wider team. On another occasion, opportunities to speak with adults and children involved in the concern had been missed. The placing authority and Ofsted were not informed about a separate allegation against a member of staff. This has meant that managers have been unable to assure themselves that the children feel safe and regulatory oversight is undermined.

When the children are missing from home, staff collaborate with partner agencies to help them to return safely. Where there were risks when searching for one child for some staff, they frequently contacted the child to encourage them to return home. On return staff welcomed them warmly and helped the child to understand their concerns. Consequently, the frequency of missing-from-home episodes reduced significantly. However, this practice could be further strengthened by consulting with partner agencies to proactively agree the response from staff when the children go missing from home.

Recruitment practice does not ensure that all relevant checks on new staff are fully carried out. The reasons for one member of staff leaving a place of employment with children had not been fully explored.

Staff encourage positive behaviour through clear, consistent and appropriate boundaries. Staff appreciate that each child's achievements are unique and take pride in celebrating them as individuals. When managers apply consequences to behaviours, these are always restorative. Staff help the children in understanding why they are necessary, helping them to learn from their actions.

When the children express feelings that lead them to harm themselves, they get the help they need. Staff work closely with specialist professionals to review the children's care. Because staff have had relevant training, they respond calmly and sensitively. Due to the support one child receives, incidents of self-harm have significantly reduced.

There have been no instances involving physical restraint since the last inspection. The children do not expect to be restrained while living in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is due to leave the organisation. Senior leaders demonstrate a clear management succession plan, underpinned by wider organisational support. This has provided continuity for the children and stability for the staff team.

Managers have strong links with partner agencies and education providers within the organisation. They work closely with schools and therapists to seek best possible outcomes for the children. Feedback from professionals is positive. One social worker said, 'It is an absolute pleasure to work with them.'

Managers use external scrutiny to continually develop the service. This has resulted in improvements, such as to communication systems between staff. Managers actively seek the children's views to shape the care they receive. This means that the children have more positive experiences in the home.

Children know how to make a complaint. One child received an impressive response from senior leaders to a complaint into alleged bullying from a peer. Consequently, the children know they will be taken seriously.

Managers have strengthened medication administration procedures. Following a brief period in which there was an increase in errors when administering medication, managers have taken significant action to identify contributing factors and to put in place relevant safeguards and improved training. This has been effective in reducing risks to the children.

Despite challenges in staff recruitment, managers have worked diligently to ensure that the children have received care from consistent, familiar staff, who know them well. When new staff join the organisation, they say they receive a good quality induction which prepares them for their role. However, managers have not taken effective action to ensure that all staff have received frequent supervision in line with organisational policy. This undermines managers' opportunities to further develop staff practice and identify further training 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 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— 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 that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(v)(vi)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff understand their responsibilities to report any concerns about staff conduct to designated safeguarding managers without delay. In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff take effective action to seek appropriate medical advice when there are concerns involving injuries to children. In particular, the registered person must ensure that all concerns about staff conduct are appropriately investigated. They should aim to consider the views of any adults and children who may have been involved in the circumstances. Managers should ensure that there are effective systems in place to enable strong safeguarding investigations which thoroughly consider any lessons learned and are focused on children's welfare.	2 April 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure systems are in place so that all staff receive regular supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. The registered person should ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. The manager must ensure that all relevant checks on new staff are fully carried out and well documented. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that all serious events are notified, including allegations against staff, to the appropriate relevant people without delay. Notifications must include details of the action taken by the home's staff in response to the event. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

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: 2698124

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SWAAY Child & Adolescent Services Ltd

Registered provider address: SWAAY Child & Adolescent Services Ltd, 591 London Road, Cheam, Sutton, Surrey SM3 9AG

Responsible individual: Gerard Berry

Registered manager: Anna Ditcham

Inspector

Glen Strowbridge, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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