

2700720

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

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation. It is registered to care for up to three children who may have social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home, which was operating as a solo placement. The child was spoken to during the inspection.

This home does have a registered manager, however, an acting manager is in the process of applying to manage the home. This acting manager had been in the role for one week at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 June 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be 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	requires improvement to be good
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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: 2 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

The home is ideally suited to the specific needs of the child. Although it is sparsely furnished in some areas, it is appropriately furnished and is homely. The child says she is happy living in the home and feels well supported by the staff and management team.

Staff have worked hard to understand the presenting needs of the child. They regularly communicate and collaborate with the in-house therapist to ensure their knowledge and skills stay relevant to the child's evolving needs. As a result, the child has begun to build relationships that allow them to feel able to communicate their feelings. Over time, this support has strengthened the child's resilience and increased their self-awareness.

Staff recognise the importance of the child staying connected to their family. The child is supported to have family time in the home and community. Staff have also enabled the child's parent to develop their understanding of their child's needs, and this has created some positive memories for the child.

The staff's efforts have significantly bolstered the child's confidence in interacting with external agencies. Initially, the child only felt comfortable seeing external professionals in the home. However, with consistent support, the child has progressed to actively requesting these services in community settings. This demonstrates how the child's emotional resilience and independence in managing such interactions have evolved. Additionally, the positive relationships that the staff maintain with external agencies support effective multi-agency planning and response, ensuring the child's needs are met.

The child is registered with an alternative provision but is not in full-time education. The management oversight of the child's education is poorly organised and does not show how the child's education is positively progressed. In addition, there is no clear education timetable for each week and learning materials are not readily available for when a child is not attending school. The child sometimes has to wait while staff get organised for each day's education. The system does not yet have the required level of coordination and response. The manager is arranging to meet with staff from the alternative provision to try and implement a more structured approach to the child's education needs.

The child has developed her independent living skills with the support of staff. However, there is no clear plan relating to the child's preparation for independence. Therefore, staff are unaware of what areas to focus on and develop with the child. In addition, the child has a high level of staff support and there is no plan to reduce this in readiness for future independence.

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

The staff use their experience and training to manage the child's behaviour effectively. Incidents have recently reduced as the child has become more settled in the home and their relationships have become more established. Overall, incidents are managed well and records are detailed. The manager provides child-centred evaluations which identify any areas for development, and these are then provided to the team.

The child's specific needs require them to take medication daily. The medication process is compromised by poor management oversight of how medication is stored, recorded and audited. This could significantly impact the child's health if medication was incorrectly administered.

The child's use of household products requires management and monitoring. Work is in progress to support the child to develop greater understanding of how to safely use products. The child has been supported by staff to gain insight into this specific behaviour. There is a recording procedure relating to this process to ensure products are not ingested. However, the recording system is not being used. Therefore, staff are unaware if the child is being harmed when using products.

The staff have built on their knowledge regarding the child, and this has been captured in detailed risk assessments. Information relating to the child is duplicated in other forms. However, practice in updating all the forms is not consistent. Therefore, staff could be confused about the right approach to adopt.

The child's complex needs necessitate a high staff-to-child ratio to ensure their safety. To maintain appropriate staffing levels, the manager uses agency staff daily. By consistently using the same group of agency workers, the manager provides the child with familiar and consistent staff who understand their specific needs. This approach enhances the child's feelings of being safe and supported by staff who know them.

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

Leaders and managers are enthusiastic in supporting the child to progress and achieve positive outcomes. The manager has a clear vision and understanding of the areas of development needed. They are keen to implement positive changes to improve outcomes for the child.

A strength of the home is the focus on the training and development of staff. The in-house therapist provides staff with a forum to reflect on their practice and care of the child. Child-specific training has been delivered to in-house staff but not to the agency workers used. Agency staff would benefit from accessing this training to support their understanding and ability to respond to the child. In addition, it would allow them to work more closely with their permanent workforce colleagues.

Leaders and managers do not have robust monitoring systems in place. These would allow them to identify the effectiveness and shortfalls in care practice. Without systems being implemented, the manager does not have a clear understanding of the areas for development of the staff.

The staff benefit from regular reflective practice, group supervisions and individual appraisals. They say the manager is supportive and approachable. The manager does not yet carry out regular supervision for staff in accordance with the statement of purpose. In addition, the manager does not discuss all agenda items, to obtain a complete update regarding staff.

External professionals and the child's parent have confidence in the care provided. They say that communication is good and meetings are well attended by the manager and staff. As a result, important information about the child's progress is shared and can be monitored by all involved.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(b)) This particularly refers to the home having plans regarding the child's education and structuring days for when the child is not in school, so they continue to learn.	12 August 2024
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	12 August 2024

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; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(h)) This specifically refers to ensuring robust quality assurance and monitoring systems are in place, used regularly and recorded. In addition, that managers maintain oversight in relation to the risk of ingesting products that the child is allowed to have.	
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 medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that the medication procedure is clear, and all staff are competent in administering medication to avoid errors being made.	12 August 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.	12 August 2024

(Regulation 33 (4)(b))

This particularly refers to supervision of staff taking place in line with the home's policy of being completed once a month after the six-month probation period. During the probation period, it should take place twice monthly.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff help the child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home or moving to another placement or adult care. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

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: 2700720

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Abbey Green Therapeutic Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Suite 3, Mercia Court, Bingham, Nottingham NG13 8QX

Responsible individual: Michael Stanway

Registered manager: William Cunningham

Inspectors

Lizette Watts, Social Care Inspector
Netsai Muzuva, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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