

2718813

Registered provider: Acorns to Oaks Children's Care & Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have emotional and social difficulties or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2025.

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

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 August 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	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: 9 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2024	Full	Good
18/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/06/2023	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported by a knowledgeable and experienced staff team, whose members provide them with consistent structures, routines and boundaries. Consequently, children feel safe and are settled and are provided with a strong sense of belonging and stability.

One child has moved out and another has moved into the home since the last inspection. Children were supported to understand these changes using their preferred methods of communication. The team has made good use of social stories for one child in order to support their understanding and has ensured clear, planned and effective transitions for children.

Children are supported to spend time with people who are important to them. One parent praised the staff team for the support and level of care for their child, describing the team as being 'brilliant'.

Health and education are consistently promoted. Children's attendance at school is 100%, and they continue to thrive academically. The team works alongside a variety of health professionals to ensure that children's health needs are met.

Children are being supported to develop their methods of communication. Staff use pictures, symbols and social stories to aid children's ability to participate in decision-making about their daily lives.

Children have enjoyed holidays with the staff and are encouraged to develop hobbies and interests as well as taking part in a range of activities in the community. These opportunities broaden the children's experience of the world and help them to build confidence and social skills.

Children live in a beautiful and well-maintained home with lots of opportunities for fun. Children have bedrooms that are personalised for them, and the home and garden are filled with toys, books and games that meet their sensory and cognitive needs and support creative play.

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

Staff provide children with caring and consistent responses that encourage positive behaviours. There have not been any incidents of staff needing to hold children to keep them safe.

Consequences as a response to children's behaviours are rare. When these have been used, their effectiveness is evaluated by the manager and support for children is detailed.

Children have trusting relationships with the team. For one child who did not want to move from the home, leaders and managers provided professional challenge to the child's placing authority and commissioned an advocate on their behalf.

Children's plans are extremely lengthy and contain a number of inaccuracies, which can be confusing for newer members of the team. In addition to this, not all children's records include their most recent statutory documents, including care plans. While this has not impacted on the care children receive, the manager recognised this as an area in need of improvement.

There has been good decision-making regarding children coming to live at the home. However, assessments completed prior to children's admission do not yet evidence consideration of the needs of the children already living in the home alongside those new to the home. This has not impacted on the experiences of children, and they live together happily.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager was previously the home's deputy manager. Consequently, she has a good understanding of the children and their risks and vulnerabilities. She is an experienced and passionate advocate for the children and has established positive relationships with both professionals and families.

The staff team shared positive feedback regarding the support from leaders and managers and the frequency of supervision. However, the quality of supervision records varies and does not consistently reflect that staff are receiving appropriate challenge or support. This limits opportunities for staff to reflect and learn.

The quality of care review reflects a detailed knowledge of the children and the progress they are making. However, the report provides limited information and actions to make improvements for the following six months and does not consider the views of staff or professionals. This is a missed opportunity to build on the wider learning that takes place in the home.

Staff are supported through regular team meetings. The meetings provide staff with an opportunity to reflect on their practice and support for children and discuss areas for development as a team.

Staff have access to a range of training that supports their care of the children. However, leaders and managers have not ensured that all staff have completed training specific to children's individual 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 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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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)(c)(h)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff have completed training specific to children's individual needs, and that monitoring and review systems are used to make continuous improvements.	2 October 2025
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	2 October 2025

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that each child has all relevant statutory documents and that children's records are accurately completed and maintained.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff receive consistent supervision which enables them to reflect on their own practice and develop goals for continuous improvement. Recording of supervisions should be of consistently high quality. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that the quality of care review includes the views of staff and all relevant professionals and clearly identifies any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the independent person regularly gathers the views of all relevant stakeholders to make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should ensure that pre-admission assessments provide a clear rationale about how the needs of children new to the home can be safely met alongside the needs of children already living in the home. ('Guide to the children s homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2718813

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Acorns to Oaks Children's Care & Support Limited

Registered provider address: Acorns to Oaks Children's Care & Support Ltd, Suite 3,
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Responsible individual: Helen Johnson

Registered manager: Nicola Aldous

Inspector

Kelly McCurdy, Social Care Inspector

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