

# 2745136

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a well-established provider who operates children's homes across the country. It is registered as a home for up to six children who have complex needs which may include learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorders and other complex associated difficulties. The home is currently closely linked to a local special school and, as such, operates a 38-week per year provision. The provider advised that the home will be open at weekends if needed, but closed in line with academic holidays. At the time of the inspection, five children were living at the home.

The registered manager has been in post since the home's registration on 10 November 2024. This is the home's first full inspection since registration.

### Inspection dates: 24 and 25 April 2024

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** not previously inspected

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** not applicable

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are very positive about living at the home and about the staff who care for them, and talk about them with love and affection. One child said it was like having a second home. Another child wrote a letter to Ofsted about the impact being at the home has had on his life. In the letter, the child said:

- 'The people at the home have been amazing they have stood by me through everything.'
- 'They are some of the best people I will ever meet, I would never be where I am today if it wasn't for their support.'
- 'This team of people have become a second family to me and each one of them has left a forever lasting effect on me and my life.'
- 'I can't say enough how lucky I am to have come to this home in my life.'
- 'Eight years ago, my future was looking bleak and looked like when I reached 16 I was probably going to end up in a prison cell, but because of this team of amazing people and the support they give me day in day out they are always there for me. I couldn't recommend a better place if I tried, this is the best residential home ever!'

These views were supported by other children at the home and their parents. One parent said it was like a 'house full of lovely Mummies'. Another said they feel that the progress their child has made means she and her child are positive about the child's future, and that had it not been for the staff in the home they do not feel their child would have maintained their school placement.

Children are making good progress from their individual starting points. Children are at different stages in their journey of developing their independence skills; this development is appropriate to their age. Staff are very proud of the children's achievements and celebrate these.

Staff have wonderful relationships with the children they care for. The basis of their care ethos, which comes from the manager, is 'if it's not good enough for their children, it's not good enough for the children in the home'. All staff demonstrated their commitment to the children they care for. They understand each child's needs and how these are to be met.

At the end of the educational year, three children are leaving to move on to the next stage of their lives. The staff are supporting these children, as well as those children who are remaining at the home, through this time. Managers have taken positive steps to support these children and their families in identifying and visiting potential new provisions. Staff are helping children and their families to manage anxiety around these

moves. Staff have been assuring the children that this is a natural progression that happens in all families, and that staff will still be there for them.

Staff have created wonderful memory books for each child which detail the child's life at the home, the activities they join in with and their achievements. The children take these with them when they leave.

Staff have provided the children with a lovely home that is comfortable, well furnished and welcoming. Children have been involved in choosing the decor, which gives them a sense of ownership, and they do see it as their second home. Children and staff love that they have their own home, particularly having their own spacious garden.

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

Children are kept safe, and they said that they feel safe, at the home. Staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities and the additional, individual vulnerabilities of the children they care for. Safeguarding events are appropriately managed. The manager appropriately raises concerns with education providers and advocates for the children and their families when required. Appropriate actions are taken in light of safeguarding events. However, there has been one incident, involving the police, where appropriate actions were taken, but a notification was not made to Ofsted as required. The manager addressed this during the inspection.

Behaviour is well managed. Staff support the children effectively to recognise their emotions and develop strategies to manage these. Incidents are rare, but when they do happen they are well managed.

Staff are not risk averse. They manage risk and work effectively with children to develop their understanding of risk and how to manage this. Children's plans clearly detail the risks, the level of risk and how this will be managed, which promotes consistency of practice.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

This is the home's first inspection since registration as a children's home on 10 November 2023.

The manager has a clear vision for the home and is ambitious for the children in their care and the staff team. This vision is based on the manager's in-depth understanding of the home, their robust monitoring, and the effective use of the independent person reports. The manager has developed and instilled a strong ethos in the staff team regarding the children receiving high-quality care and wanting the best possible outcome for each child.

The manager is an excellent advocate for the children. An example of this is the manager effectively advocating for a child to remain at the home and their school, which has proved to be very positive for the child and their future.

Staffing levels are good, enabling quality 1-to-1 time with children. Staff are very positive about working at the home. They were particularly full of praise for the home's leaders and managers. They find them to be caring, supportive and 'brilliant' managers.

Staff benefit from receiving good-quality supportive and developmental supervision. In addition to this, staff meetings are a key part of the development of the home and the staff team, where they discuss inspection reports of the organisation and other services. Staff training is comprehensive, with the additional benefit of some training sessions taking place with staff from the organisation's other homes, providing an opportunity to share practices.

Children's records are of a good quality and provide clear, detailed guidance for staff, which supports the continuity of care. Leaders and managers have identified that they want to improve the quality of records further to ensure vague and institutionalised language is not used.

## 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     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.<br/>(Regulation 40 (4)(b))</p> | 30 June 2024 |

### 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:** 2745136

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Aspris Children's Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey GU21 6HT

**Responsible individual:** Michelle Garstang

**Registered manager:** Tracey Thatcher

## Inspector

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector

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