

2747302

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home is registered to provide care for up to three children.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 30 January 2024, when the home was registered with Ofsted. The registered manager was not present in the home during the inspection.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. The inspector spent time with one child. Another child provided their views in writing.

The term 'carers' has been used throughout the report to reflect the home's preferred title to describe staff.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 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: 10 September 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/09/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Care approaches focus on supporting children to acquire skills in line with their growing independence. Children make progress to learn how to travel independently, to cook, to complete application forms, and to manage their own appointments. Additionally, children learn how to manage their own medication to promote their independence. Importantly, children feel ready to move on and to live independently, or to live with reduced support.

Children are encouraged to actively participate in care planning decisions about their future. They attend care planning meetings and express their views. Managers challenge children's future care plans when they have concerns. They communicate with children effectively to help them to understand actions taken.

Children are supported to develop positive relationships with carers. This helps children to talk to them about the issues that impact their lives. At times, children participate in positive activities with carers. Photos are collated in books for children to look back on to recall positive moments in their lives. For example, photos show children enjoying 'a buffet to remember' at Christmas time and carers in fancy dress, and a child enjoying a recent holiday in the UK.

Managers and carers work hard to support each child, but they do not always achieve a balance that allows the child to develop their independence while ensuring that their day-to-day needs are met. This includes support to help children to develop healthy routines and boundaries effectively, including a healthy diet and sleep routine. Additionally, one child's bedroom was observed to be in a poor state.

Children have not attended education provisions consistently and they do not participate in educational activity throughout the day when they are at home. Managers and carers explore future education and employment opportunities with children. This has supported all the children to apply for college courses in the new academic term.

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

Managers and carers understand the risks posed to children and respond effectively. For one child, the home has forged a strong safeguarding response with partner agencies. Actions taken to protect the child from harm outside of the home are effective. This approach has directly contributed to stability for the child in their care arrangements.

Individual risk assessments are detailed but tend to lose focus about current risks and strategies. Occasionally, strategies discussed by carers are not included in risk assessments. However, staff are consistent about the actions that they need to take to increase children's safety. This includes when children are missing from the home. There is a well-coordinated response to children when they are missing from the home.

Carers provide children with nurturing responses and reassurance at times of increased stress and distress. Conversations take place with children about how to keep themselves safe. For instance, carers speak to children openly about relationships, sexual health needs, drug misuse, and about self-harm. However, care approaches are not helping children to cease vaping.

At times, managers and carers conduct searches of children's rooms. The rationale for room searches to reduce risks to the child and others is recorded clearly. Concerns are shared with the child's placing authority when needed.

Following incidents, managers review incident records. They provide reflection and learning for carers to directly inform support provided to children. When actions are not implemented promptly, managers follow-up with carers to ensure that children receive the support that they need.

Managers work with the children's placing authority and parents effectively to ensure that time spent with friends and family members is carefully assessed and promoted without any unnecessary restrictions. Carers demonstrate curiosity about children's friendships in the community and online to help keep them safe. Additionally, links are forged with friends' parents to ensure that arrangements for them to spend time together are safe. However, these links are not maintained to ensure that safe time together is always promoted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively, including in the registered manager's absence. An experienced deputy manager uses learning from practice to improve support provided to children. Senior managers understand the home's strengths and weaknesses.

Managers have managed staffing shortages well to minimise the impact on children. Action is being taken to address vacancies. Arrangements for recruitment reduce the risk of unsuitable persons working in the home.

Managers understand the goals and care plans for children. They monitor progress that children make to acquire skills for their independence effectively. One child described that living in the home is 'helpful' to them to prepare them for moving on into adulthood. An external professional described a child making progress in 'leaps and bounds', referring to their increasing independence.

Managers' monitoring of the quality of care to ensure that care approaches help children to develop positive boundaries and healthy routines, is less effective. This reduces opportunities to identify and to implement creative alternative strategies when the desired outcome is not achieved.

Training activities for carers are effective. They are focused on the specific needs of children. Learning is disseminated across the care team to promote consistent responses

to children and to reduce risk. Carers are informed about the home's model of care, in line with its statement of purpose.

Managers ensure that the physical environment in the main areas of the home are well-maintained. However, office areas and rooms that are locked detract from a homely environment. Senior managers responded to concerns about the physical environment of one child's bedroom. They said that action would be taken to improve this.

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, 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(i)(ii) In particular, the registered person must ensure that carers are equipped with strategies that help each child to develop skills that lead to healthy routines. Additionally, interventions must ensure that children's daily needs are met.	19 October 2025
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.	12 September 2025

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; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care for each child to achieve their potential. When strategies are not effective, these should be reviewed and alternative approaches used that lead to the desired outcome. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that a homely environment is maintained. Office areas should be in keeping with a homely environment and children should be able to access all areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2747302

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Shropshire Council, Shirehall, Abbey Foregate,
Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Responsible individual: Daniel Old

Registered manager: Paige Fletcher

Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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