

2754777

Registered provider: Action for Children

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a service run by a national charitable organisation. The home is registered to provide care for one child who has social and emotional difficulties. One young person was living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2023.

This is the first inspection after registration.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 September 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The young person's world has been 'unlocked' and they flourish in the home where they say that they feel safe and secure. The care that they receive is individualised and nurturing, which is supporting them to have a happy and fulfilled life. The young person has formed trusting relationships with staff who care and support them in a loving environment. Staff know the young person exceptionally well. Consequently, the young person has developed a sense of permanence and belonging.

The young person has made significant progress from their starting point when they first came to the home. The skills and innovation of the staff, who make every interaction with the young person a moment to enjoy and learn from, have played a very significant part in helping the child to achieve this. Staff have a unique understanding of the young person's needs and vulnerabilities. They work hard to form positive connections and to provide the young person with the appropriate level of support to help them to know that people care about them.

The young person has engaged in a broad variety of positive activities, and this has been life changing for them. Among a vast range of achievements, the young person can now better communicate with family and staff, can carry out personal care tasks for themselves and has developed other important life skills for their future. This has increased their confidence in their abilities.

The young person is listened to and says that they like the home, the staff, the activities, and the food, especially 'pizza day.' The young person has access to a range of communication tools to ensure that they have choices throughout their whole day. For example, the young person chose a hot tub for the garden, a part of the home they had not previously chosen to spend time in. The young person also enjoys baking, trampolining, playing on the swing and listening to stories that staff read to them. The home is a welcoming and homely environment.

The young person's progress is celebrated every day and shared with their family and professionals. Photos beautifully capture the activities and memories that are made. This gives an understanding of the young person's time in the home and provides opportunities for them and staff to reflect on the progress that has been made. The staff are proud of the young person's successes.

Good health is actively promoted, and medication arrangements are exceptionally thorough. Staff work closely with all health professionals to ensure that the young person's health needs are managed effectively, including supporting them to access specialist support when necessary. For instance, an occupational therapist is working with staff to introduce 'massage stories.'

Staff support the young person to maintain family connections and enjoy family time. One family member said, 'Communication is amazing, I'm so blessed that my child has the team they have. I have total peace of mind that they are safe, happy and looked after. They feel loved, there is nothing more I could have asked for.'

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

The young person has emotionally warm relationships with staff. They seek them out when they need support, and staff are responsive to this. Staff are committed to the young person, saying that it is a privilege to support them. Staff know the young person incredibly well. This enables them to promptly identify any changes in the young person's behaviour. One family member said, 'I can't fault them, staff are willing to try things with [name of young person], and if they fail, they talk as a team to do better. They listen and want to learn.'

Holistic working across the staff team results in individualised plans to keep the young person safe. Any concerns or worries are highlighted, and plans are adapted to meet their ever-changing needs. Staff anticipate the young person's needs quickly. The meticulous reflection following incidents has led to a significant reduction in occasions when the young person becomes upset and frustrated.

Support from other professionals informs staff practice and contributes to the strategies used to meet the young person's individual needs. Risk management plans provide staff with up-to-date guidance about how best to support the young person's behaviour. This consistent support helps the young person to feel safe and ensures positive outcomes for them.

There are clear safety protocols, understood by all staff. High staffing ratios are maintained. The staff team is largely unchanged and consistent. This gives a genuine sense of permanence and familiarity to the young person, which, in turn, supports them to feel safe and secure.

Recruitment processes are excellent, and all new staff are subject to appropriate checks prior to their employment starting. Induction processes for new staff are thorough. Routine servicing and maintenance of the premises ensure that the buildings and gardens are safe. Responsive staff address any damage or concerns promptly.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is ambitious, inspirational and influential in changing the life of the young person in their care. They have created a culture of learning and reflection and a safe environment. Consequently, the young person has built trust with staff.

The registered manager is enthusiastic and dedicated to providing high quality care to the young person. She knows the strengths and weaknesses of the service extremely

well and has thorough oversight of all aspects of the home. The independent visitor provides a good level of scrutiny to support the registered manager to further improve the quality of care provided to the young person.

The young person is cared for consistently in line with the home's statement of purpose. The registered manager models a culture of mutual respect, which staff and the young person embrace. Staff talk positively about the leadership and management of the home describing it as 'exceptional.' Staff value the comprehensive training that is provided and link this to the significant progress that the young person has made. One staff member described the progress of the young person as, 'A testament to the effectiveness of our team's efforts and the inclusive, excellence-driven culture fostered in the home.'

Staff attend customised training that specifically focuses on learning around the young person. Learning from training is well embedded in practice. The highly motivated team of staff are led by managers who have extensive skills, training and experience. Consequently, the young person receives care that is of the highest standard.

All staff are fully supported through regular and detailed supervision. These sessions focus on the needs of the young person and individual staff development. This support is also enhanced by team meetings which give staff further opportunities to reflect on their practice. Consequently, staff feel fully supported in their roles and staff morale is extremely high.

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: 2754777

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Action for Children

Registered provider address: Action for Children, 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG

Responsible individual: Samantha Oliver

Registered manager: Gail Tanner

Inspector

Hannah Cox, Social Care Inspector

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