

2794494

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

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider. It provides care for up to 4 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or have learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2024.

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 May 2026

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: 15 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/04/2025	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children are well cared for by a stable and committed staff team, helping them feel safe, nurtured and loved. Staff know the children well and understand their needs, risks and vulnerabilities, which helps them provide consistent and high-quality care. Children attend school regularly and staff provide creative activities and learning opportunities at home to support their development and social skills. The manager promotes a culture of high expectations and aspiration for the children. Staff say they feel well supported by the manager and by each other. The manager and staff also work with other agencies to achieve the best outcomes for children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have trusting and secure relationships with staff. The staff are dedicated and focus on the children's strengths to help them achieve the best possible outcomes. The children are making good progress in all areas of their lives.

Staff carefully plan meaningful and fun activities both inside and outside the home. These activities are tailored to the children's individual needs and help promote their social and emotional development. One child has recently started going swimming with a member of staff, which is a significant achievement and shows positive progress.

Children attend full-time education and continue to make progress in their learning and development. Staff are ambitious for children and encourage learning at home. Staff have positive relationships with education professionals and maintain daily communication to support and promote the children's welfare.

Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and use creative ways to communicate with them, for example, using visual aids for children who are pre-verbal. One child's speech continues to develop, and they now say short sentences, which is great progress.

The children are in good health and staff support them to attend health appointments and access specialist services. Since living at the home, the children have continued to make positive progress in all areas of their health and wellbeing.

Staff consistently promote and celebrate positive children's achievements, both big and small. Children receive a high level of encouragement and emotional warmth every day. Staff reward children in creative and fun ways that support their welfare and wellbeing and help build their confidence.

Children are supported to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff actively promote meaningful and positive relationships with family members in a way

that is child focused and led by the children's needs. Staff also provide regular updates and photos to parents to help maintain family connections.

Children live in a welcoming and spacious home. The children's bedrooms are personalised and there are lots of toys, games and sensory areas to explore throughout the home and garden. There are colourful images displayed on the walls to support the children's communication, and photos of the children and staff throughout the home. However, some areas of the home are showing signs of wear and would benefit from maintenance and redecoration.

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

Staff are proactive in helping to protect children from harm and have a thorough understanding of the children's risks and vulnerabilities. There are comprehensive safety plans in place, which are specific to the children's individual needs. They provide clear actions for staff to follow to keep children safe and are regularly updated.

Staff use their knowledge and experience to support children's emotional wellbeing, especially when children are experiencing strong feelings and emotions. This helps children feel safe and secure and reduces the risk of harm to themselves and others.

Staff provide clear, consistent boundaries and routines which help create stability in the children's lives. Children also use social storyboards to help them understand what is happening next in their day. The children are benefiting from this structure.

Children are supported to take safe and appropriate risks that match their age and level of understanding, helping them to learn and grow as part of their development. Staff use a strength-based approach in their practice, with the child's needs at the centre of everything they do.

Safer recruitment processes are in place. This helps to ensure that only adults who are safe to work with children are employed at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced, caring and dedicated registered manager. One staff member described them as, 'The nicest manager I have ever worked with. I learn something new every day.'

There is a stable staff team in place who are committed to providing high-quality care for the children. The manager and staff care deeply for the children. One staff member said, 'In this house, staff want to be here and love the kids, we want the best for them.' The culture of the home is characterised by high expectations and aspirations for the children.

The manager ensures that the children's plans detail their individual needs. Children's views are recorded in documents which include detailed observations, achievements and

photos, and are written directly to the child. This helps highlight the children's progress, wishes and feelings, and supports a strength-based approach to practice.

The manager monitors each child's progress and can show the positive impact that living at the home has on their individual progress. An independent reviewing officer said the children have 'settled right in. They have just thrived.'

Managers and staff receive regular and effective supervision that focuses on the children's experiences and supports staff development. Supervision is recorded well. Staff say they feel well supported by the manager and by each other.

Team meetings are well attended and focused on the children. Staff also share learning from training they have completed with the rest of the team. All staff are up to date with training and complete specific training to meet the children's individual needs.

The manager and staff have good working relationships with parents and external professionals, which helps achieve positive outcomes for children. Feedback from parents and professionals is positive. One social worker said, 'I can't speak higher of them - brilliant home and meets their needs.'

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home are maintained to a high standard. ('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: 2794494

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Registered provider address: Acorns to Oaks Children's Care & Support Ltd, Suite 3,
125-129 Witton Street, Northwich CW9 5DY

Responsible individual: Helen Johnson

Registered manager: Jade Thetford

Inspector

Joy Viles, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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