

2806268

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for three young people with social and/or emotional difficulties or special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024, and this was the home's first inspection since registration. The registered manager holds a Level 5 qualification and is suitably experienced to oversee the running of the home.

Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection and the inspector spoke to two of them.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 May 2025

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: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living in this home make exceptional progress from their starting points and have positive day-to-day experiences. Children receive care from extremely committed staff who are child centred and value the open and honest relationships they build with children. Staff seek to understand children's needs through research-based practice to ensure they deliver high-quality, individualised care. The quality of these relationships and support significantly enhances children's life chances and provides them with a wide variety of opportunities.

Children benefit from extremely well-planned moves into the home. Leaders and managers put in place child-centred plans to alleviate any concerns or anxieties children may have. Staff meet children in advance, provide photos and videos of the home and seek their views before they move in. This helps children begin to build relationships with staff, become familiar with their new environment and personalise their bedrooms. This positive planning helps children settle quickly, supports a sense of belonging and provides them with a platform to make sustained progress.

Staff help children to remain healthy, both physically and emotionally. They ensure children's daily activities and routines support them to stay active. Additionally, staff provide children with a healthy and nutritionally balanced diet. When children require support with their emotional health, the home's psychologist provides one-to-one support. This helps children improve their physical and psychological well-being over time.

Children make significant progress from their starting points with regards to their attendance and engagement in education. Staff understand the value of education and show initiative when there are barriers to children's learning. With support from the psychologist, they collaborate with teachers to help them better understand children's needs and make decisions to ensure they can continue to make progress. This level of support has been particularly successful with one child and ensured they have received the additional educational support they require.

Staff undertake high-quality, individualised and purposeful work with children. For example, staff have developed creative communication methods to ensure children can express their views effectively regarding their emotions, feelings and wishes. With one child, staff have used their favourite fictional character to help them understand what is being said. Staff also use play to obtain children's views. This approach is now being used across the wider service and the provider's other homes, meaning it is reaching more children and having a positive impact on the care they receive.

Staff support children to spend time with their families. They recognise the importance of these relationships and work alongside children, professionals and family members to ensure this is a positive experience. Staff are proactive in addressing any issues when

they arise. For example, when children are not having positive experiences when seeing family, staff readdress the expectations with family members and adjust visits to ensure children continue to have positive experiences.

Children are supported to engage in their community and build social skills. Staff encourage them to attend various local clubs. This helps children to build positive friendships while also providing them with memorable experiences. Children are also encouraged to take part in activities with staff. Staff capture these experiences with photos, which are displayed around the home and also stored in each child's individual records, capturing each child's journey while living in the home.

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

Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of children's risks, needs and behaviour. They provide consistent daily routines and boundaries that provide children with certainty in their care. Children's plans are detailed and regularly reviewed. Plans have clear guidance and strategies to help staff keep children safe. Children engage in and contribute towards their own plans. This helps children feel safe and well protected.

Staff have an exceptional understanding of the risks posed to children online. Children are provided with educational work from staff and professionals to help them understand the dangers posed on the internet. This positive educational work has supported one child to create their own presentation on internet safety, which they have delivered at local community groups. Additionally, a filtering system is in place to protect children from accessing or receiving inappropriate material. The controls in place were successful in safeguarding one child from potential emotional harm.

Children rarely make allegations. On the one occasion where a child did make an allegation, appropriate action was taken. Managers ensured the immediate safety of the child, shared information with safeguarding agencies and ensured the child was spoken to by someone independent. Leaders and managers also made sure there were opportunities and learning in place for the staff member. This approach ensures the safety of the child while also making improvements to staff practice.

The home has an appointed psychologist who works with the registered manager and staff to develop strategies to support children with their emotions. In addition, the home's therapist provides additional training to staff to ensure trauma-informed approaches are embedded into practice. This helps staff to have a full understanding of children's needs and how to manage changing behaviours or risks, while also allowing for flexibility in approach when responding to children.

When children have made disclosures of historical abuse, managers have taken steps to support them to ensure their safety is maintained and psychological well-being supported. They have shared information with children's social workers to ensure safeguarding measures can be put in place where necessary. This ensures children feel listened to and supports them to build trust with the staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers demonstrate an excellent understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager and deputy manager are incredibly child focused, have a clear understanding of the progress children are making and celebrate children's achievements. Managers are committed to ensuring children receive the highest standards of individualised care, not just for now but in the future. For example, the manager has already begun creating a moving plan to ensure children can continue their progress after they have moved on from the home. This displays an exceptional level of commitment towards children.

There are extremely effective monitoring systems in place. The manager and staff team have embedded systemic approaches to monitor and track children's progress from their starting points. Staff use information from a variety of sources to help identify what has contributed to each child's progress. Additionally, the manager uses learning reviews to inform his systems to further highlight this progress and also monitor the quality of care provided to children and identify where this can be improved.

Managers provide an incredibly supportive environment for staff through consistent daily advice and guidance. Effective supervision sessions and appraisals encourage staff to use reflective approaches to assess how they can improve their practice and the quality of care provided to children. Furthermore, managers ensure specific training is in place for staff to build their knowledge, understanding and skills to meet children's specific needs. Managers are enthusiastic about incorporating a research-based approach and use the expertise of external professionals to embed this into staff's daily practice.

Children benefit from a stable staff team that is highly committed to supporting children. Since registration, there has been a consistent core group of staff in place who have the skills, knowledge and understanding to meet children's needs. Staff are incredibly positive about their experiences working in the home and feel well supported by managers. One staff member said, 'The management team were the main reason I wanted to work in this home. They are so supportive and are passionate about the quality of care provided to children.'

Relationships between staff and professionals, partner agencies and families are exceptional. Managers fully understand the relationship-based approach and embed this into staff's practice. They understand that children require additional support using a variety of skills and expertise and identify and involve relevant professionals to support this when needed. Furthermore, they maintain excellent communication to ensure all involved in children's care always remain up to date with their progress.

Feedback from professionals is incredibly positive. One professional said, 'Two children have progressed significantly since living in the home. The commitment and dedication all the care team have given to the children to ensure they know them as individuals has made a profound difference in their progression. Where one child was struggling in education, managers have advocated relentlessly to ensure support the child needed was recognised and put in place'.

There are no requirements or recommendations.

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: 2806268

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Daniel Old

Registered manager: Lee Perry

Inspector

Carl Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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