

2806362

Registered provider: SV Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a small private provider and can provide care for up to four children aged 7 to 17 with social and emotional difficulties. The home has not been previously inspected.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March 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: 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: good

Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. All children were seen during the inspection. The children have complex needs and are making good progress from their starting points. One child, who had previously left the home, recently returned at their own request.

Children are well cared for. Staff interact positively with them and offer support and reassurance when children are struggling with their emotions. Staff use creative strategies to help the children to communicate their feelings, and they write them positive messages and notes when they are feeling low.

The home is well presented, with areas for the children to be together, play games and watch movies on large televisions. Staff support children with a high staffing ratio. This helps ensure that children have time with staff to enjoy fun activities outside of the home, such as visits to cat cafés, arcades, indoor trampoline parks and bowling.

The manager recognises the importance of children having a good education. One child is attending a mainstream school after a significant period out of education. The child is managing well and making good progress socially and academically. Children receiving home tutoring have also made progress and are undergoing assessments to help them to achieve alongside their peers. One external tutor said, 'I have never seen better support. The staff are fantastic, and they make the home welcoming, which provides the perfect teaching environment.'

Children are actively involved in their care planning. Staff write clear and informative support plans and ask children to read what has been written about them. Children are asked to feedback and comment on whether they wish to make changes.

Children are helped to be in good physical health. Staff make and attend appointments with children. They help them to feel comfortable with accessing treatment.

The manager considers children's past experiences when planning new admissions to the home. Before decisions are made, the manager welcomes professionals to the home to discuss suitability and obtains more information before deciding if the child would be suitable for the home and the children living there.

Managers work closely with families, social workers, reviewing officers and specialists to ensure that information is shared widely. The manager has professionally challenged local authorities when there have been delays appointing new social workers and when paperwork has not been sent in a timely manner.

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

A serious incident occurred during the inspection that required the support of emergency services. Staff acted with care, compassion and professionalism, which enabled the child to remain calm and rejoin staff and other children in the home. Due to the way the incident was managed by staff, other children were not impacted in any way.

Children feel able to speak to staff when they are experiencing negative thoughts. Staff offer safety and security for the children. This means that when incidents do occur, children are more able to reflect with staff and managers and accept support from external bodies.

Physical interventions have only been used as a last resort. There has been a significant reduction in their use over the last few months as staff have got to know children well and how to meet their needs.

When children raise concerns, staff and management are responsive. Information is shared with the relevant people outside of the home. Children are consulted with and updated on the outcome. Children said they are satisfied with how complaints have been managed and feel listened to.

Staff have a good understanding of the children's vulnerabilities. This helps them to respond confidently to most difficult incidents. However, staff complacency contributed to a serious incident that could have been avoided. The manager has responded appropriately, investigated what happened, has met with staff to discuss the incident, and implemented strategies to ensure this doesn't happen again.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably skilled and has the relevant experience. She registered with Ofsted in 2024 and is completing the level 5 diploma.

The manager is enthusiastic about achieving the best outcomes for the children. She works with compassion and empathy and has the ability to connect with the children. This helps the children feel safe and well cared for.

Supervisions are frequent, effective and support staff development. These take varying forms, from formal to impromptu and job chats. This enables the staff to have many opportunities to talk about the children, reflect on their practice and discuss worries and concerns.

The manager has ensured staff are provided with the appropriate training to be able to support children who struggle with their emotions. The manager has engaged external bodies to work with staff and has identified a research-based model of care to strengthen staff knowledge and skills.

Team meetings are conducted regularly. Managers invite external agencies to attend and develop staff awareness on matters such as substance misuse.

Leaders and managers have employed a welfare and development officer to support healthy inductions and increase the skills of senior staff. This is helping to ensure they are supporting workers effectively.

Feedback from professionals is positive. One social worker said, 'I think she is a very good manager, relates to professionals well... always with respect; she's proactive and knows what needs to be done to produce good outcomes.' Another social worker said more broadly about the leadership team, 'They are very professional and very child centred. Because of this, we have absolutely no concerns.'

Overall, incidents are notified to Ofsted in a timely manner. However, there have been two occasions where the notification about a serious incident was not sent to Ofsted without delay. Delays can affect Ofsted's ability to effectively monitor the service.

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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular the standard requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that risk management strategies relating to potentially hazardous products are complied with.	15 March 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	1 April 2025

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: 2806362

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SV Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 71 Knowl Piece, Wilbury Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire
SG4 0TY

Responsible individual: Hayley Perrett

Registered manager: Jessica Sloan

Inspectors

Dan Williams, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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