

2808683

Registered provider: Amegreen Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children with learning disabilities. At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. All the children were seen and spoken to during the inspection.

The manager registered when the home was registered in October 2024.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 June 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 are thriving because they are cared for by staff who are committed to providing high-quality care. Relationships between children and staff are based on trust, respect and good humour. A family member of one child said, 'She is so happy and contented now. She has become much calmer. I cannot believe how she has changed for the better.'

All children have made significant progress, despite the short time they have lived in the home. Children's experiences while living in the home are transformative, and their worlds have been expanded as a result. For instance, one child no longer spends significant time in their bedroom. Instead, they spend time in the company of others, they go on walks and visit a stable regularly. Although this child does not vocalise to communicate, they now communicate eagerly in other ways and are progressing to more advanced communication aids. None of this was previously thought possible by professionals, parents or the child themselves.

Children's days are filled with joy and excitement, and this is underpinned by the routines in place and the exceptional relationships that they have with staff. Children enjoy spending time with each other and with staff. Due to the quality of relationships, children are sensitive to each other's likes and dislikes and are developing empathy, which is also role modelled by staff. Consequently, children are now learning how to understand feelings better and how responses can contribute to building and maintaining positive relationships.

When children are new to the home, the arrangements to manage this are thorough, thoughtful and child centred. Moves take place at a pace that is suitable for all the children and individualised social stories are used to support children's understanding of pending changes in the home. This helps to reduce anxiety at a time of change.

Staff demonstrate a deep commitment to wanting children to achieve well in life. All children are now able to use communication aids to share what they want, need or do not like, due to the dedicated support of staff. Barriers that previously compromised the effectiveness of communication have been overcome and children's voices are at the heart of daily practice. One child has particularly excelled in this regard, and they have been supported to use communication aids to convey complex emotions around time with their family. These views have been shared with relevant professionals and have in turn influenced the child's care plan.

The unwavering support that children receive from staff gives them confidence that they can achieve their goals. One child recently completed his first hack at horse riding. Six months ago, he was not able to tolerate wearing a helmet. Another child recently attended a school fun day and enjoyed the bouncy castle and petting zoo. Again, this was previously not possible.

Children's progress in their school attendance and educational achievements is exceptionally strong. All children are in full-time education, and they are making steady progress with their learning.

The support that children receive in relation to their complex health needs is a particular strength of the home. One child is now on reduced medication, enjoys a healthy and balanced diet and has received much-needed medical intervention following tenacious advocacy by leaders. This is because leaders, managers and staff are knowledgeable about the rights of children and current good practice in this context. For another child, staff used social stories, books and physical play to support their understanding of how their diagnosis affects them and to prepare them for upcoming treatment. They creatively devised an activity which was a mock-up of the procedure. This helped the child to feel prepared for how the treatment might feel and understand why this intervention was necessary.

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

There is an exemplary safeguarding culture in the home. Staff and managers know the children extremely well and have an exceptionally thorough understanding of their strengths and vulnerabilities.

Children have frequent opportunities to share their wishes and feelings. Staff are adept at using various communication aids to facilitate this. Staff tackle complex topics with children such as safeguarding, relationships, consent and human rights. Expertly planned key-work sessions and children's meetings allow children time and space to consider information and to respond when ready. Actions arising from these conversations are taken promptly. As a result, children have a sense of autonomy and confidence.

Staff encourage children to take measured risks, while ensuring their safety. Children's risk management plans clearly describe how to keep children safe and are updated when children's needs change. Staff have an in-depth understanding of these plans. Where required, individual risk assessments interlink with health and education plans, which creates consistency across various provisions. This means that there is a strong holistic understanding of risk presentation and a consistent approach for children.

Physical intervention is not used in the home. This has been life changing for some children, who had previously experienced daily physical intervention. Staff recognise that children's behaviour communicates need. When difficulties arise in the home, staff are curious with children and support them to navigate their strong emotions through the use of communication aids, sensory play and strong routines.

The language used by staff, both recorded and spoken, reflects their understanding of the children and patience in working with them, as well as the chosen model of care. As a result, children have made remarkable improvements in their ability to better manage their frustration, upset and anger, in the home, in the community and with their families.

One parent said, 'On family days out she is less harming to others and herself. It is amazing.'

When safeguarding matters do arise, managers respond quickly and robustly. Any lessons learned are swiftly shared with the staff team and subsequent actions are embedded in practice and then monitored for effectiveness. This is underpinned by an excellent culture of safeguarding in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by an experienced registered manager and an equally knowledgeable deputy manager. Together, they have successfully embedded a culture of positive regard and aspirational practice that has resulted in exceptional changes to children's lives.

A strength of the leadership team is their belief that children with disabilities can have autonomy and that their voices are not only relevant but central to planning their care. The deputy manager has worked tirelessly to embed this ethos in the staff team and beyond. As a result, the children are seen for their individual strengths and can contribute to their own care planning in a meaningful way.

Leaders' engagement with the local community, charities and wider partners is inspirational. Children have co-created art with their local community, they have raised money for charity and delivered and received hampers from neighbours. As a result, children enjoy a strong sense of local connection, which benefits their developing sense of self and their self-esteem.

Staff praise the support and guidance that they receive from leaders. There is a consensus among staff that leaders take an interest in their well-being and development and encourage them to take pride in their work, which makes them feel appreciated. They highlight the experience and ambition of leaders as being central to the positive experiences of children.

Staff appraise their practice in regular high-quality supervision, critical reflection sessions and team meetings. However, the registered manager could not locate records of his own supervision from before January 2025. Staff have access to a wide variety of training that enables them to meet the needs of the children. As a result, children are cared for by exceptionally well-informed staff who feel valued and respected.

Safer recruitment practice is excellent. There are appropriate processes in place to identify and recruit new staff members. This is followed by a robust induction process, which leaders use positively to ensure that all staff are appropriately supported from the start.

Professionals from the various agencies that work with the home are positive about the quality of care that children receive and the progress that children make.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for all staff, including the registered manager. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 60, paragraph 13.3)

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: 2808683

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Amegreen Children's Services

Registered provider address: The Corner House, 18-20 West End Road, Mortimer, Berkshire RG7 3TF

Responsible individual: Rachel Redgwell

Registered manager: Martin Honour

Inspector

Becky Paradise, Social Care Inspector

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