

2812214

Registered provider: Aspire 2 Be Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a small private company and provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties and learning disabilities. Two children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted at the same time as the home was registered on 13 January 2025.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 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

Since registration, two children have moved in and continue to live at the home. Both children were present throughout the inspection. One child shared their views with the inspector.

Staff build positive relationships with the children. They help the children to make steady individual progress from their starting points. The staff help the children to use creative ways of communicating their thoughts and feelings. For example, one child uses a journal, while another uses instant messaging services to contact senior leaders. This helps children to feel heard and that they have different communication options available to them.

Staff use a therapeutic, informed approach to understand children's past experiences and trauma. They work in a therapeutic way. An independent reviewing officer commented that staff have been able to form a good relationship with their child in a short space of time. A social worker said that the staff 'do a great job in nurturing' the child. As a result, the child is now happier to tell staff when and where they are going out. This helps to increase safety for the child.

Children enjoy social activities in the community. Staff try to establish what children might enjoy and encourage activities that support the children's emotional and physical health. When children's engagement is variable, staff explore the barriers to their full participation and gradually address these at the child's pace.

Staff support the children's education well. Consequently, the children make progress from their starting points. Neither child had been in education for a long time before moving into the home. Staff have worked with professionals to find suitable education and developed individualised plans. Staff have helped one child through a planned, phased integration to start attending school in person. This is a significant step forward for this child. Staff continue to encourage another child to engage in tutoring.

Staff support children's identity and cultural needs. The staff are professionally curious and gently explore the children's attitudes and experiences of their individual culture and identity. For example, staff set up a subscription to help one child explore different products and follow routines to keep their hair healthy. Staff researched one child's cultural traditions alongside them, and continue to spend time exploring and taking them out to activities related to their culture.

Staff understand how important family relationships are to children. Staff help to arrange visits between children and their family. They consider how this can best be achieved in a way that is enjoyable for the child and their family. Staff advocate for children to see their siblings.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's individual complex risks and support needs. There are clear plans in place to guide staff in how to respond to risk, such as self-harm. Staff explore the child's feelings and offer them safer alternative ways to express themselves. Staff know what to do when they are unable to provide the support needed and ensure that children receive the expert assessment and help required.

Staff manage incidents and risk well. Managers work closely with relevant professionals to manage safeguarding incidents. They keep professionals updated and involved. One social worker said that in a short space of time, the staff 'have really got to know them [the child], their triggers and what they need in a moment of crisis'. This helps children to steadily form trust in the staff caring for them. Professionals have confidence that the staff keep the children safe.

Restraint is used rarely and only if this is necessary to safeguard children. On the one occasion where restraint was used, the manager reviewed the incident to ensure that the use was appropriate. They have ensured that discussions have taken place with staff and children to reflect on the incident.

The manager responded immediately and appropriately to an allegation against a staff member.

Staff talk to children about the risks of exploitation and substance misuse. When appropriate, they have arranged for external agencies to help. Exploitation and substance misuse have been a concern for one of the children. However, staff have not received training in exploitation and substance misuse. Some staff have not completed their core safeguarding training. Not all staff have completed first-aid training despite one child presenting significant self-harming behaviours. Staff training in safeguarding, first aid, preventing exploitation and identifying and addressing substance misuse is essential to ensure that their knowledge is up to date and that they are in the strongest position to be able to help children with these needs.

Missing-from-home incidents have been a longstanding concern for one child. Since moving in, this had recently significantly reduced but has started to rise again. Staff are curious about the recent increase. Staff work with the child to understand where they are going and who they are spending time with. They contact the child and encourage them to return safely. However, staff do not always follow the child's individual missing-from-home protocol properly. While managers have taken some steps to address this, there remains inconsistency. This is of particular relevance as the child is at high risk of exploitation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a child-focused management team. The manager models a therapeutic approach and effective engagement with the children. The manager has a very good understanding of individual risk and what this means for children. The

manager's engaging and involved approach means that the children and staff feel well supported.

The manager communicates closely with the children's social work team and involved professionals. This helps to progress planning for education and family time. The manager is a good advocate for children. She comprehensively challenges professionals when it is appropriate. This helps to ensure that children receive the support they need and prevents drift.

The manager encourages children to express their views and experiences. When children have raised any complaints, the manager has responded quickly and fairly. Staff have helped one child to make a complaint against an external agency. This shows children that their experiences and rights are important and should be heard.

The manager's oversight is present, and reflective practice is modelled well. The manager identifies what staff have done well and any learning. Managers challenge staff in a child-focused way when necessary. Such challenge concentrates on reflection and learning in order to prevent something similar happening again.

There are examples of child-centred recording. Records are written in a respectful, thoughtful way and capture the meaningful conversations with the children. However, the quality of recording is variable. Sometimes, it is not clear who did what and when. This has the potential to undermine the manager's ability to review the quality of care and support that children receive.

On one occasion, a member of staff began work at the home without all pre-employment suitability checks in place. While they have not been left unsupervised with children, there is no clear assessment of risk or protective measures in place. The managers have not been proactive enough at seeking the outstanding reference to help them assess staff suitability.

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 in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)) In particular, ensure that staff consistently follow the proper procedure for children when they are missing from home.	30 June 2025
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that staff have completed all core training and training in response to children's individual needs.	28 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. They should ensure that written references from previous employers are proactively sought and that a recorded risk assessment is in place should they begin their induction before this time. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2812214

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspire 2 Be Limited

Registered provider address: Ascot Sinclair Associates, Avondale House, 262 Uxbridge Road, Pinner HA5 4HS

Responsible individual: David Whitty

Registered manager: Kealy Davis

Inspector

Carrie Twinn, Social Care Inspector

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