

SC008273

Registered provider: Searchlight Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for one child who has had adverse childhood experiences.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since August 2023 and holds a leadership and management qualification at level 5.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home. The child was spoken to as part of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 February 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: 12 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2024	Full	Good
12/09/2023	Full	Good
24/01/2023	Full	Good
14/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is warm and welcoming. Since the last inspection, the registered manager has redecorated parts of the home, and the addition of soft furnishings has helped to create a homely environment. The child's bedroom is decorated to reflect their individual interests, particularly their passion for football. As a result, the child feels a strong sense of belonging.

The child has lived in the home for over 4 years and is settled. They have made progress across all areas of their development, supported by the strong, consistent and caring relationships they have with staff. Staff have a clear understanding of the child's needs and are committed to providing continuity of care. During the inspection, warm and relaxed interactions between the child and staff were observed.

The child attends school in line with their needs. They are making good progress and meeting all their attainment targets. A deputy headteacher stated, '[Name of child] is fantastic and works hard to reach all their goals.' Staff understand the importance of education and actively support the child by attending all school meetings and maintaining regular communication. The school reports having an effective professional relationship with the home.

Staff understand and respond well to the child's health needs. The child attends all routine health appointments and is encouraged to maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff support the child to engage in activities outside the home, such as football and youth club, which promotes their physical and emotional wellbeing.

Staff support the child to maintain relationships with those who are important to them. They listen to the child's views and advocate on their behalf, including supporting increased family time with their sibling. Staff have also responded sensitively when the child has chosen not to attend family time with certain relatives.

Staff actively promote the child's independence. The child is encouraged to spend time with friends in the local community, and direct work has been undertaken to help them understand how to keep safe. The child enjoys spending time with their friends and is a committed football supporter who regularly attends home matches of their favourite team. Staff recently arranged a matchday experience, which the child is very excited about. This demonstrates the staff's commitment to promoting positive experiences.

The child's views, wishes and feelings are actively sought and considered in relation to their care and the day-to-day running of the home. As a result, the child feels listened to by staff and the registered manager.

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

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and consistently promote the child's safety. They know the child well and are confident in recognising and responding promptly and appropriately to any concerns. The child spoke positively about staff and identified trusted adults they could speak to if they had any worries.

Allegations in the home are rare. When concerns do arise, the registered manager responds appropriately to safeguard the child's welfare. Referrals to external agencies are made when required, ensuring effective oversight and additional safeguarding assurance.

Since the last inspection, there have been some low-level concerns relating to bullying. Staff have responded appropriately by helping the child understand the risks associated with bullying and its potential impact. Regular direct work supports the child to develop strategies to manage these risks, and they have been able to apply their learning in the school environment.

The child enjoys using their games console, and staff provide regular safety guidance. Appropriate safeguards are in place to promote safe online use. The child also has access to a mobile phone with agreed boundaries to support safe use, and routine checks of the device provide additional safeguards.

Safer recruitment practices are in place, ensuring that only suitable adults are employed to work in the home.

Incidents in the home are generally low, reflecting the positive and trusting relationships the child has developed with staff. When the child becomes upset, staff use appropriate de-escalation strategies. As a result, the use of physical intervention is low and only ever implemented as a last resort. Debriefs are completed with the child and staff following incidents, ensuring that the child feels listened to and enabling staff reflection and learning.

Although physical intervention is rarely used in the home, there have been occasions when locked doors and window restrictors in downstairs areas have been used to manage the child's behaviour. These measures are not routinely risk assessed to ensure they remain proportionate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably experienced and appropriately qualified. She demonstrates a clear commitment to promoting the child's welfare and development. The manager is supported by a deputy who shares her values and ethos, providing clear leadership and continuity in the home.

The home benefits from a stable and committed staff team. Staff report that they enjoy working in the home and feel valued and well supported by the registered manager. One member of staff described the registered manager as 'incredibly supportive' and highlighted her key role in creating a supportive and inclusive working environment. Supervision and team meetings take place regularly, offering staff the opportunity to reflect on the child's progress and on their own practice.

New staff have joined the home since the last inspection. They have received a detailed induction that includes shadowing experienced team members. Staff spoke positively about the support provided by managers throughout the induction process.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. Monitoring systems are in place and support effective oversight and continuous improvement. These systems help to ensure consistency and continuity of care for the child.

Staff receive training that equips them with the knowledge and skills required to meet children's individual needs. This includes specialist training in areas such as domestic abuse. Most staff hold the required qualifications for their roles. Those who do not are being appropriately supported and are working towards achieving the qualification within the required timescales.

Professionals speak positively about the home and the care provided to the child. They report good communication with the registered manager and staff team. One social worker said, 'The stability, routine and consistent care provided by staff have contributed significantly to their child's progress.'

There is a responsible individual in post, supported by an operations manager who is currently undertaking aspects of the responsible individual's role, particularly in providing guidance to staff and supervising the registered manager. However, roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined. As a result, the responsible individual does not have full oversight of the home, which limits their ability to provide effective leadership and accountability.

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

Statutory requirement

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
A responsible individual must— satisfy the requirements in paragraph (5)(a) to (c); and have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(a)(b))	11 March 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that locking external doors is only used as a security precaution when it forms part of the home's normal routine. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.62)

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: SC008273

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Searchlight Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Marcus House, Parkhall Road, Longton, Stoke-on-Trent ST3 5XA

Responsible individual: Denver Underwood

Registered manager: Kimberley Craig

Inspector

Lydia Isaac, Social Care Inspector

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