

SC015254

Registered provider: Aspris

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to five boys who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager left in August 2022.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 January 2023

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: 28 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
19/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
06/08/2018	Full	Outstanding
31/08/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are four children currently living at the home. The children are settled. Staff support children to develop trusting relationships and recover from their past experiences. The staff know the children well and talk about them warmly.

Two children have moved out in the last year. The staff have continued to support these children as they settle into their new homes. This support helps children to feel confident about their futures. Three children have experienced positive moves into the home. Detailed suitability assessments and thoughtful consideration have helped children to feel secure and settle into their new home quickly.

The staff value the importance of children's education. They work closely with teaching professionals to ensure that children who experience barriers to learning are supported and that any issues are resolved quickly. The staff advocate strongly for the children to ensure that their education provision is suitable. A change in school provision has led to greater engagement in education, improved attendance and respectable mock exam results. Effective communication between the staff and the school staff ensure that children benefit from a well-coordinated approach to education.

The house is welcoming and homely. The lounge, chill-out room and games room provide the children with the space to enjoy films, games and consoles. The 'Bat Cave' provides older children with a separate, safe space where they can spend time away from the other children. Children's artwork and photos are displayed throughout the home. This helps the children to feel that they belong and that the house is their home.

Children receive high levels of emotional and practical support from staff to help them develop and maintain relationships with their families. Staff advocate for the children and work proactively with parents and professionals to plan family visits. For some children, detailed planning has enabled them and their families to have unsupervised meetings and successful overnight stays.

Staff support children to think about their futures. Children have individual 'good life plans'. Staff encourage children to pursue interests and activities that they find purposeful and enriching. These include children attending a drama group, football clubs and army cadets. These social and cultural experiences encourage children to develop lifelong interests and equip them with social skills ready for independent living.

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

Staff support children to understand risks and take steps to keep themselves safe. This is achieved through regular workshops, key-work sessions and therapy.

Sessions are focused on children's individual needs. Incidents such as going missing from the home, self-harm and peer relationships are appropriately addressed by staff, using key-work sessions. These help children to feel empowered and contribute to their own safety planning. The staff support children to take age-appropriate risks to develop their social, emotional and independence skills.

Children say that they feel safe. They trust staff and approach them for help and support. The relationships between staff and children are warm and respectful. The atmosphere at the home is calm and relaxed. These relationships help staff to manage difficult incidents without the need for physical intervention.

Staff take appropriate and swift action when children are missing from the home. The police and local authorities are routinely informed. Managers provide good oversight of incidents, appropriate safeguards, and identify actions. Staff amend children's plans and risk assessments to reduce incidents and keep children safe. However, there are inconsistencies around reporting missing-from-home episodes to Ofsted. This affects Ofsted's ability to monitor incidents.

Leaders and managers ensure that children have individualised plans and risk assessments. These are informed by the local authority care plans and include relevant information. Staff encourage children to read and contribute to their plans. However, information is duplicated across several different documents and is not always consistent. One child's file contains conflicting information about the length of the child's free time. Consequently, staff are unsure of the safety plan for this child.

The staff use financial consequences in response to children's behaviour. However, this measure is not in accordance with the home's policy or the ethos described in the home's statement of purpose.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager left in August 2022 to take on the role of responsible individual. The internal promotion of the deputy manager and, continued involvement from the responsible individual, has ensured consistent managerial oversight. The children continue to receive good-quality care.

Leaders and managers have a clear understanding of the progress that children are making. They are a highly visible presence. Children enjoy spending time with the managers and feel able to approach them for help. Managers have established excellent relationships with children's families and other agencies to help them to meet children's needs. The feedback from parents and social workers is unanimously positive.

The staff receive consistent supervision. In addition, the in-house therapist provides staff with opportunities to explore their practice. Child-focused team meetings are held regularly and are well attended. This results in staff working well together and providing a consistent approach to the children.

Children's case records are generally well documented. However, for one child, placement plans from the local authority have not been received since the child moved to the home several months before. This has left an extensive period when the child's records, detailing the child's needs, have not been available.

Thorough training packages are provided. Staff access online training portals, as well face-to-face training provided by the in-house therapist. The recording systems fail to demonstrate the attendance dates and content of the training. This fails to evidence that staff have attended targeted training to meet children's individual needs.

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, 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 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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)) In particular, ensure that: children's risk assessments provide clear and consistent guidance for staff; staff have access to specialist training, including in subjects such as sexually harmful behaviours, substance misuse and mental health; records reflect staff training; any actions taken in response to safeguarding concerns and allegations are clearly recorded.	1 March 2023
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b))	1 March 2023

In particular, ensure that any financial consequences are implemented in line with the home's policy and statement of purpose.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))	1 March 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	1 March 2023

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: SC015254

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspris

Registered provider address: The Forge, 43 Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6DB

Responsible individual: Helen Llewellyn

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector
Tom McGhee, Social Care Inspector

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