

SC036584

Registered provider: Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. The home provides care for up to four children, who may have faced adverse childhood experiences. As a result, children may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2023. He holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 May 2024

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: 27 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2023	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living at the home. The inspectors spent time with each of the children.

Children enjoy good health and are supported to understand and manage their own health needs. Staff encourage children to attend regular health appointments. Referrals are made to specialist services as needed, including to substance misuse and therapeutic services, to support children's good health. As a result, children's health needs are being met.

Children have trusting relationships with staff. Staff use playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy in their approach and this helps children to explore how to manage their emotions. For one child, staff's approach has helped to reduce incidents. Planting fruit and vegetables in the garden, doing activities in the community and having regular discussions about their well-being all contribute to children enjoying good emotional well-being.

With the help of staff children meet their education goals. Staff have supported one child to prepare for an interview with an employment and education provider. Another child has been helped to settle into a new learning environment after a significant period of not being in education. A professional from another child's school said,

'We have watched them flourish knowing the troubles that they have faced. The home has been immaculate in settling them and attending meetings. The home staff are always happy to see them and on our family day one of the carers attended and the child lit up the room.'

Children are encouraged to share their views, wishes and feelings. Children's meetings are held monthly and children are encouraged to share what they think about the care they receive. Children also choose a variety of activities and meals. The manager responds to children's views and follows up on their requests. Children are rewarded when they achieve their goals and staff recognise children's hard work with compliments.

Staff support children to prepare for independence. Children get involved with cooking meals and shopping, to develop their budgeting skills. One child is now confident in booking their own appointments.

Children experience positive moves from the home. For one child, a visual planner and being involved in meetings helped them to have a good move. Staff supported another child to move from the home safely when they had to move abruptly. The compassionate approach of staff has resulted in children staying in touch after they have moved on. Children recognise the positive impact of their care and have written to staff to thank them.

The home environment is warm, welcoming and homely. Children enjoy personalising their bedrooms and this helps to promote their identity and independent living skills. Furnishings are modern and shared living spaces are used well by children, who are proud to have their reward charts on display.

Family time is promoted by staff and helps to ensure that children's emotional and identity needs are met. Regular communication with professionals and families ensures arrangements are safe. When a child has gone missing from family time, effective communication has resulted in prompt action to support the child's safety.

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

When children need to be held to keep them safe, staff do this appropriately. Reflective follow-up work is completed with children to explore and understand the reasons for their behaviour. Staff have monthly team meetings with a therapeutic worker to help review and develop strategies to use with children. As a result, staff respond effectively to children, which has led to a decrease in the number of times children have been held by staff.

Staff respond to missing-from-home incidents well. There are clear risk management plans in place that are followed. Staff are vigilant and respond well when they receive information of concern, to reduce the likelihood that a child will go missing.

Leaders work effectively with other professionals when concerns arise regarding exploitation and substance misuse. A creative approach helps children to understand risk and how to keep themselves safe. For example, children help to plan their free time and have completed child-friendly training on topics including radicalisation and substance misuse.

Children say that they feel safe and that staff understand their needs. Children share their views and feelings when an incident has happened, and they are aware of how to make a complaint. As a result, children feel heard by staff.

Overall managers act promptly when children raise a concern about staff working at the home. They ensure that someone independent comes to talk to the child. However, on two occasions managers did not share concerns with the local authority designated officer (LADO) in line with the organisation's policy. In addition, they did not notify Ofsted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is enthusiastic and passionate about children having safe and positive experiences. The manager is supportive of staff and ensures that development needs are identified and worked through with them. One staff member said, 'I feel very supported

by the manager. We have monthly supervision and extra for any development areas in our practice.'

Recruitment practice is safe and the manager is assured that staff are the best fit for the role.

The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. He has good oversight of incidents and reviews them thoroughly. The manager is critical of staff's practice, to ensure that they consistently provide a good standard of care. He regularly reviews the auditing systems in the home to ensure strong oversight.

The manager ensures that staff are well trained and that training addresses 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, 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— 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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when allegations against staff are made the organisations safeguarding policy is followed.	5 July 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious (40(4)(e)). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: SC036584

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council, Civic Centre,
Walsall WS1 1TP

Responsible individual: Jivan Sembi

Registered manager: Neil Allen

Inspectors

Chanel Bryant, Social Care Inspector
Caoimhe Richards, Social Care Inspector

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