

SC061795

Registered provider: Southern Adolescent Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to 6 children.

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2022.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 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: 25 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/06/2025	Full	Good
09/05/2024	Full	Good
20/06/2023	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

Children receive individualised care built on positive relationships, consistency and nurture, helping them to develop trust and to engage in daily life. Some children show clear progress, particularly in managing their emotions and education. Staff respond effectively to safeguarding concerns, working with external agencies to reduce harm and using disruption strategies to minimise exploitation. They support children to reflect on behaviours and develop safer coping strategies, contributing to reduced risks. Staff combine clear boundaries with effective care, creating a safe, structured environment that supports behavioural de-escalation. Staff demonstrate reflective practice and adapt their approaches in line with children's evolving needs. While experienced staff understand children well, lengthy risk assessments and behaviour plans limit usability, especially for newer members of staff, and records do not consistently capture children's views or next steps.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive individualised care, underpinned by positive relationships, consistency and nurture. This enables children to build trust and engage more effectively in their day-to-day experiences. There is clear evidence of progress for some children, particularly in emotional regulation and engagement in education.

Children benefit from strong, trusting relationships that support their emotional security and day-to-day experiences. Children describe staff as 'warm', 'approachable' and 'honest'. This creates an environment in which children feel able to express themselves openly and develop a strong sense of belonging. Positive relationships with families are appropriately promoted to maintain important connections for children.

Staff support children to access a range of health services, including specialist therapeutic input and child and adolescent mental health services, demonstrating good awareness of children's emotional needs. Education is promoted, with staff working to address barriers and encourage engagement.

Children are encouraged to share their views through various forums. Staff make efforts to incorporate children's preferences into daily life and promote inclusion through culturally sensitive activities and shared experiences. Children are also regularly consulted in more informal ways, ensuring that their wishes and feelings continue to influence their day-to-day care.

Children benefit from a warm, family-like environment in which they experience a wide range of positive and meaningful activities. Staff support children to pursue their individual interests, including baking, playing the guitar and going on trips abroad. One child proudly talked about their recent holiday to Rome, speaking positively about the

experience, what they had learned and the memories they had made. Also, they have been encouraged to develop their entrepreneurial skills through their interest in baking.

Staff create opportunities for shared experiences, celebrations and the development of independence skills, which support children's readiness for adulthood. There are good examples of thoughtful and supportive transition planning.

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

Safeguarding systems are in place and align with statutory requirements. Leaders promote a culture of reflection and continuous improvement, with an awareness of areas requiring further development. Children are cared for by a committed and responsive staff team that prioritises their safety and continues to strengthen safeguarding practice.

Multi-agency working is well established, with leaders making appropriate notifications and escalating concerns when required. Leaders demonstrate emerging persistence in their engagement with partner agencies. As a result, children benefit from coordinated support that promotes their safety and wellbeing.

Staff respond promptly and appropriately to safeguarding incidents, working in partnership with police, families and professionals to reduce harm. There is clear evidence of persistent efforts to locate children when they are missing from the home and the proactive use of disruption strategies to minimise exploitation risks. Staff support children to reflect on their behaviours and develop safer coping strategies, which contributes to a reduction in risk.

Staff provide clear and consistent boundaries, successfully balancing nurture with appropriate challenge. This creates a structured yet flexible environment where children feel safe and supported, contributing to the de-escalation of behaviours over time. Reflective practice is evident across the team, with staff learning from experiences and adapting their approaches. Children feel safe to challenge themselves, which supports their growing confidence and promotes sustained, positive progress.

Staff have a developing understanding of children's complex and changing risks, including exploitation, self-harm and missing-from-home incidents. They use relational approaches and reflective conversations effectively to help children understand and manage risk, contributing to measurable reductions in harmful behaviours. Responses are timely and proportionate, supporting children to be safe.

Experienced staff know the children well, enabling prompt and effective responses to behaviours. However, risk assessments and behaviour support plans are overly lengthy, which limits their practical use, particularly for newer or less-experienced staff. Although staff can verbalise the support provided, key-work sessions do not consistently record clear next steps or evidence children's views and reflections.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced registered manager who promotes a caring and supportive environment. The registered manager, regional manager and responsible individual provide strong leadership, prioritising relationship-based practice and children's emotional wellbeing.

The registered manager is a visible leader who has established strong relationships with the children and demonstrates a good understanding of their needs. Children feel comfortable approaching the registered manager, whose responses are proportionate and realistic. When children's wishes cannot be acted on, staff and leaders explain this clearly to them, and children respond well to these discussions. External professionals provided positive feedback about the quality of care provided in the home.

Leaders and staff provide strong and consistent advocacy for children, challenging local authority decisions effectively when necessary to ensure that care arrangements meet children's needs. This includes supporting children to move towards independence at a pace that reflects their readiness. Staff maintain meaningful contact post transition, and leaders advocate for appropriate onward placements when notice is issued, as well as offering continued support beyond the notice period.

Staff report feeling consistently well supported through supervision, training and therapeutic consultations, which contributes positively to the home's culture. Oversight of staff development is reflective and promotes personal accountability. Leaders strike a good balance between recognising staff strengths and effective practice and constructively challenging attitudes and language when necessary. Leaders provide individualised support to improve staff practice, and disciplinary procedures are escalated appropriately when required. Requirements and recommendations raised at the previous inspection have largely been met.

The team's ability to maintain a homely environment, despite damage and ongoing challenges, reflects strong commitment and resilience. There is evidence of child-centred practice, particularly during moves into and out of the home, whether planned or unplanned. This includes the personalisation of living spaces and a focus on promoting children's independence and emotional development. However, instability has been evident for some children since the previous inspection. Some children required moves to more-specialist or smaller settings, while others sought increased support from their social workers during times when other children in the home were in crisis.

The instability experienced by some children is the result of a combination of factors. These include the complexity of children's needs, some of which were not fully known to the provider before admission, as well as challenges in identifying and anticipating how individual needs and behaviours may affect others living in the home. This was further intensified by staff turnover. Although new staff have been recruited, this continues to present an ongoing challenge.

Leaders have a clear plan to address identified challenges, including increasing permanent staffing to promote greater stability for children. Plans are in place to ensure more timely support for children affected by others' behaviours, alongside more targeted preventative work to reduce incidents of escalation. Leaders are also committed to strengthening assessment and referral processes by improving dialogue with local authorities, to ensure that sufficient and comprehensive information is obtained before children move into the home. The current team works cohesively and shares a commitment to providing stability for the children living in the home.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they only accept placements where they are satisfied that the provider can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. This should take into account staffing sufficiency, as well as staff skills and experience, while maintaining high-quality care for children already living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', pages 14 and 15, paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that records are child centred and written in a way that is meaningful to the child and supports staff in managing children's behaviour effectively. This should be applied particularly to risk assessments, behaviour support plans and key-work sessions. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraphs 14.4 and 14.5)

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: SC061795

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Southern Adolescent Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Michelle Callard

Registered manager: Sarah Chaston

Inspectors

Steve de Souza, Social Care Inspector
Claudia Poienar, Social Care Inspector

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