

SC061795

Registered provider: Southern Adolescent Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home, registered to care for up to six children up to the age of 18. There were five children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2022.

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: 9 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2024	Full	Good
20/06/2023	Full	Good
14/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/05/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff meet the children's needs. Children are supported to attend health appointments, and staff encourage a healthy lifestyle through a healthy diet and the activities offered to the children. This has had a positive impact on children's health and well-being and supported them to take part in activities that they are passionate about.

Specialist help including emotional and mental health support is made available to children, in line with their individual needs. Art therapy has been used to support one child settle into the home. Staff attend consultations with specialist practitioners and learn how to help children manage their anxieties and behaviours.

Children are treated with respect. Staff provide children with positive and fun interactions, and a good level of care that is sensitive to the children's family history, diversity, gender identity and children's own values. Staff work positively with parents and individuals who are important to children to promote meaningful family time. Children's achievements are celebrated and rewarded. This helps new children settle into the home and supports all children living in the home to feel valued.

There is careful planning when children move into the home and children feel welcomed. The manager and staff are passionate about supporting children, irrespective of the challenges they may present. However, the manager is also realistic and reflective when children's needs cannot be met in this home. When children move from the home, the manager ensures that they experience positive endings, whether this is a planned or unplanned move.

None of the children living in the home are in mainstream education. While waiting for their placing local authorities to identify suitable educational provisions, the children are enrolled in the provider's alternative education project. Children are offered bespoke educational plans, tutoring and learning activities, both in the home and in the community. The manager and the tutors/headteacher work together to advocate for the children's educational needs when children transition into mainstream provisions. This is effective. Two children have been offered college placements and adjustments are being agreed to ensure that the children are provided with the necessary support to help them reach their full potential. Another child is supported to access an apprenticeship, and a mainstream school has been identified for a child who recently moved into the home. The children are learning and making progress in comparison with their starting points.

Staff support children to reach independent skills, according to their individual needs, for example shopping, budgeting, cooking, doing laundry and using public transport.

The physical environment at the home is safe and secure. There is a homey feel, and the children contribute to the decorating of the home.

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

Staff know the children well, including their background, likes, dislikes, behaviours and how to support them in times of crisis or when having fun. Children can identify at least one trusted adult to share their worries with. Children are positive about living in the home and feel supported by staff.

When children go missing from home, there are clear action plans in place for staff to follow and support the children to safely return to the home. There is good multi-agency work with the police and the social workers to identify longer-term safety plans to reduce risks and prevent unnecessary involvement in the criminal justice system. There has been a significant reduction in missing from home incidents in the past few months.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort. Since the last inspection, staff completed additional training to help them better manage children's behaviours and improve de-escalation techniques. Staff support children to manage their feelings with empathy and by responding to their behaviours with clear boundaries as to what is acceptable and safe. Staff say that this has reduced the risks and has improved their relationship with children.

Staff keep children increasingly safe. Incidents are responded to in line with safeguarding procedures and the children's care plans. Risk assessments and support plans provide clear advice and actions staff should take to support them and reduce risks. There is effective multi-agency working with children's social workers, the local authority's designated officer and the police.

Key-work sessions are child centred and there is evidence that the children are supported to take age-appropriate risks. For example, there are discussions with children about safe friendships and family relationships, drug and alcohol use, the risks related to missing from home and staying up late, or just commending the children for positive behaviours.

Children are supported to understand internet and social media safety. The need for parental controls on children's devices is decided according to the level of risk. Some of the children are trusted without parental controls. The manager encourages staff to seek the children's consent before entering their bedrooms or conducting searches, which need to be justified.

Since the last inspection, staff have completed trauma-informed practice training, and this has contributed to a more child-centred record-keeping.

Children know how to make a complaint, and complaints are taken seriously by leaders and managers.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a permanent experienced manager who has high aspirations for children.

The manager makes child-centred decisions when considering new children living at the home and includes the needs of children already living in the home. A commissioning officer from a local authority provided positive feedback about the manager's initial risk assessment, and the introductory and transition plans offered to children prior to moving into the home.

Children's progress is monitored, and the manager can evidence the positive progress each child has made. Two social workers provided positive feedback about the children's positive experiences and progress since living in the home, and a good working relationship with the manager.

The home's manager and the regional manager are reflective and learn from complaints, staff feedback, incidents and feedback from external professionals. They work well together in identifying strengths and weaknesses. Investigations are conducted when necessary and staff development plans are put in place to ensure that children's experiences improve. Effective actions were put in place to address the requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection. Training, consultation with specialist professionals, and induction sessions for staff are effective in supporting the children's individual needs.

Staff are familiar with the whistle-blowing policy and are confident to use the informal or formal complaints process to express grievances or worries about the children's welfare.

There are gaps in staff's formal supervision sessions at the end of 2024 and in the spring of 2025. This was due to the management team completing additional day-to-day tasks to help bridge the gap left by staff shortages and to ensure that the children's needs were prioritised. While the manager and deputy manager continued to support and advise staff informally, the lack of formal supervision affected a member of staff's morale.

The manager completes regular written reviews every six months, as required. The review reports provide a generic overview of the services offered to children, but do not reflect a clear analysis of the children's views about living at the home, their individual experiences, or specific plans on how to improve the care of the children.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	20 January 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulation 45 at least once every six months. The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.2 to 15.4)

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

Inspector

Claudia Poienar, Social Care Inspector

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