

SC061837

Registered provider: Archways Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a small organisation. It can care for up to four children who have had adverse childhood experiences. Three children were being cared for at the time of this inspection.

The manager holds a level 5 diploma in leadership and management and registered with Ofsted in July 2020. Since the last inspection, there have been interim changes to the management arrangements. The previous deputy manager is now managing the home, with the support of the responsible individual. The registered manager was absent at the time of the inspection.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious incident that occurred at the setting since the last inspection is under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform the inspector's judgements.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 August 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: 30 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/05/2023	Full	Good
18/01/2023	Full	Good
07/09/2021	Full	Good
18/12/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and three children have moved in. One of the three children living at the home was spoken to by the inspector.

Children enjoy living at their home. They receive good-quality, consistent care from the staff. Children are making progress in many areas of their lives as a result of this care.

Staff are proactive in supporting children to see their families, in line with their care plans. They take them to visit their families and support them emotionally. As a result, children maintain close connections with the people who are important to them. This helps children to develop a positive self-image and identity.

Children's views are understood, and the staff act as strong advocates for them. There is good communication with external professionals to ensure that children's views are heard and that plans include their views.

Children's health and development needs are well understood by staff. They support children to attend medical appointments and persistently encourage those who are reluctant to attend. Children eat a wide range of nutritious meals and participate in physical exercise. As a result, children's good health is maintained.

Staff are supported by a clinician to establish appropriate approaches to promote children's emotional health and well-being. Additionally, staff seek specialist help when necessary. This multi-team approach means that children's all-round health needs are promoted effectively.

Staff support children to learn skills for independence. They encourage children to develop practical skills, such as doing their laundry and cooking. Staff have creatively supported one child to complete a work placement, in line with their wishes and plans. This has improved the child's confidence.

Children enjoy a range of leisure activities. These activities allow children to have age-appropriate experiences and develop their self-esteem. Leisure activities include horse-riding, day trips and holidays. Staff creatively help each child to capture these experiences in memory books that positively reflect their time at the home. Children also receive daily affirmation postcards from the staff, supporting them to feel good about themselves and their achievements.

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

Managers ensure that all allegations are investigated in line with local and organisational procedures. Allegations and safeguarding concerns are reported promptly and

appropriately to the relevant authorities. Children receive good support following any incidents.

Children's written plans and risk assessments are detailed and contain clear guidance for staff to follow. These documents are regularly reviewed to highlight any new risks or concerns. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the risks that children face. Children are supported to take risks appropriate to their age and level of understanding. Staff advocate for children in multi-agency professionals' meetings to ensure that children's views are heard and understood. This means that children are supported by staff who have the knowledge that they need to better protect children from harm.

Managers follow safer recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are recruited in a safe way. A clear training matrix is in place to ensure that all new staff have completed mandatory training, which includes safeguarding courses. This supports children to be safeguarded effectively.

The use of physical restraint is rare, and staff only restrain children when necessary to keep them and others safe. Incidents are recorded, reviewed and monitored. However, the quality of the record of one incident was not clear enough to be assured that the child was offered the opportunity to have reflective discussion with someone who was not involved in the incident.

When children go missing from home, staff respond quickly and effectively so that the risk of harm to children is reduced. Responses are well coordinated, and the police are called if required to assist in locating the child. Following children's return, reflective discussions are held with them to ensure that their views are heard and to reduce the risk of them going missing again.

Staff have regular discussions with children, using various resources, about risks in the community and keeping safe. Discussions include sensitive topics such as appropriate relationships, alcohol use and exploitation risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The interim management arrangements have not had a detrimental impact on children or staff, because of the consistent approach in the home.

Staff feel valued and well supported. They benefit from regular and reflective supervision. Supervision records are detailed and evaluate children's progress. They offer guidance and professional challenge to staff. This means that staff have the right support to improve their practice and promote the welfare of children effectively.

The home has effective monitoring systems in place. This helps managers to understand the quality and impact of care for children. The independent person supports monthly monitoring, which helps to identify the children's progress as well as any areas for development. These monitoring systems provide the rigour necessary to support practice improvements.

Managers are aware of the lack of up-to-date local authority documents for one child. Attempts have been made to obtain some of these documents. However, this has not been consistently challenged or escalated. As a result, important information about the child is not available to staff.

External professionals are positive about the difference the team at the home has made to children. One social worker said, 'My young person has come a long way and the improvement that has been seen for her in all areas has been amazing. Staff have worked really hard in minimising risk for my young person, but also allowing her to have an appropriate level of independence for her age.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should connect with and be part of the wider support system for each child in their care. No children's home will be able to meet, on its own, all of a child's needs. It is crucial that the home works in close partnership with all those who play a role in protecting and caring for the child, but particularly the child's local authority and statutory social worker. The registered person should evidence what they have done to achieve engagement, including any actions taken to escalate concerns. This is with specific reference to obtaining up-to-date local authority care plans for each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.3)
- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint are kept that enable them and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. In particular, leaders, managers and staff should ensure that the child is encouraged to express their feelings about the restraint and add their views and comments to the record of restraint in discussion with an individual who has not been directly involved in the incident. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

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: SC061837

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Archways Care Ltd

Responsible individual: Kevin Reynolds

Registered manager: Sharon Byrne

Inspector

Lisa Walsh, Social Care Inspector

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