

SC063815

Registered provider: Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority. The home provides care for up to 4 children who have faced adverse childhood experiences. The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2014 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 November 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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2024	Full	Good
20/11/2023	Full	Good
25/01/2023	Full	Good
26/10/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children have moved out of the home since the previous inspection. At the time of the inspection, three children were living in this home. Children are making good progress in most areas because of the quality of the individualised support they receive from dedicated and committed managers and staff. The care children receive is in line with their care plans.

Children live in a homely, welcoming, comfortable, and nurturing environment that is decorated and furnished to a high standard. Staff and children take pride in their home and children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their wishes and interests. Children's photos and achievements are proudly displayed throughout the home, which demonstrates to children that they are valued.

Staff are dedicated to the children they care for. They have individually and collectively participated in ongoing reflective discussions and conversations that challenge their practice and support the progress of children. They have regular team meetings and clinical consultations to develop a more in-depth understanding of children's vulnerabilities and experiences and to enhance their practice and the quality of care that children receive. Staff are mindful of children's needs, positive in their parenting approach and provide children with a secure and stable environment.

Staff use research to help them effectively communicate with children who have experienced childhood trauma. Staff are committed to learning; they gain an in-depth understanding of each child's behaviours and better support them by adapting their practice to provide a better quality of daily care. This approach helps children feel safe, understood and connected by promoting secure trust-based relationships. Furthermore, this approach increases children's self-esteem and helps them to manage difficult emotions more positively.

Children benefit from staff who understand the importance of their identity. Staff are considerate and attentive and support children to get a better understanding of their own culture and identity. For example, staff have supported one child through life-story work to get a better understanding of their family history and background. This has fostered the child's sense of belonging to their cultural heritage.

Staff support children to attend education. Staff maintain effective communication with teachers, which helps children to make progress.

Children's health needs are consistently met. Regardless of the number of medical appointments, staff work hard to ensure that children attend all of them. Staff ensure that children's health needs are monitored and that individual health assessments are in place.

Staff are creative and motivated when providing children with new opportunities and enjoyable activities within and outside the home. For example, staff take children on holiday, horse riding, roller skating, and fishing. These activities enable children to experience enjoyment and participation and give them a sense of belonging to the wider community.

Staff support children to communicate and share their views, wishes and feelings. For example, visual communication aids are used to capture children's experiences. This enables children's voices to be heard and considered by professionals when decisions are made about their future care. This promotes children's self-worth and demonstrates to them how much staff care about them.

Children are supported to spend time with their families. Staff have an in-depth understanding of the importance of family relationships to children. They promote family time well and make family members feel welcome. One parent said, 'Since [name of child] has been there, she has transformed into a beautiful young girl... that place has done wonders for her.' This support ensures that children maintain positive and meaningful relationships with those close to them and have a sense of their identity while living away from home.

Staff work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that the quality of care provided to children is coordinated. One child's social worker said, '[Name of child] is making improvements in all areas of behaviour since coming into home and settling, the incidents have reduced in the frequency and severity.' Another professional said, '[Name of child] is confident that when she asks for something she knows that staff will do it and feels listened to about their care plan.'

Some records, such as assessment plans, do not always provide up-to-date information on children's needs; however, this has not had a direct impact on children's experiences or progress.

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

The registered manager and staff understand the potential risks for children in the community and how to manage them. They assess risks associated with each child and any potential impact when new children move into the home. This level of scrutiny has resulted in a positive experience for children who have moved into the home.

Staff's safeguarding practice is strong. For example, when they are concerned about online safety, staff are professionally curious and vigilant and carry out checks to monitor children's use of electronic devices to keep them safe. This practice reduces potential risk to children.

The registered manager and staff consult regularly with specialist mental health services to discuss and investigate emerging themes and patterns of behaviour for children. Staff reflect on and examine their own practice, to see what they can do

better. This approach informs children's individual care plans and considers ways of supporting children's complex needs. As a result, some children have better understanding and management of their emotions.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks as part of their learning and development. For example, one child can now go to the shops on their own and do community-based activities without staff supervision. Another child is an ambassador representing other children in the community. This means that children learn new life skills and have better opportunities.

Behaviour management strategies are consistently applied by staff. Staff only use physical intervention when all other strategies to help children calm down have been exhausted. Staff use their understanding of the child's behaviours to enable them to manage incidents. Following any interventions, staff complete very detailed restraint records. The registered manager monitors and reviews these incidents effectively and uses this information to inform reflective discussions with staff and to improve practice.

Staff respond appropriately and in line with procedures when children go missing from the home. This includes reporting children to the police, and sharing information and working with the relevant agencies to minimise risk and help children return home safely. Staff are aware of children's specific safeguarding risks and show appropriate professional curiosity to understand their time away from the home. They ensure that when the child returns home, they are offered the opportunity to speak with an appropriate independent professional.

The registered manager has ensured that recruitment practice is thorough, and that appropriate checks are completed before staff begin working in the home. This helps to prevent unsuitable adults working with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is enthusiastic and innovative. She has an ongoing positive impact on the lives of children and staff and has established a strong culture and ethos in the home. Staff told the inspector, 'The manager is amazing, I have learnt a lot, she has shown me more creative ways of working, she knows the children well, is reflective and sees beyond children's behaviours, this has helped me to improve my practice.' The registered manager listens to staff and encourages them in their practice and development. As a result, children's lives are enriched by a highly skilled, committed, and dedicated staff team.

The manager rigorously challenges other professionals and raises their awareness to ensure that children receive the support and help that they need. She has ensured that all children have access to appropriate independent advocacy support to ensure that they have help to ensure their wishes and feelings are understood. This persistent and child-centred approach ensures that children's care and progress remain the focus for staff and partner agencies working with the children.

Leaders and the manager use a range of internal audits to monitor and track children's progress. These help to identify strengths and areas for development. The manager closely scrutinises patterns of behaviour and evaluates them to improve the quality of care provided to children. These consistent monitoring systems mean that the quality of children's care is high.

Partnership working is a strength at this home, and the manager maintains strong working relationships with partner agencies. In addition, she uses learning to continually develop children's care and generate creative ideas to support children and make positive experiences for them. Feedback from all professionals is positive. An independent reviewing officer told the inspector, 'Generally over the years, the home is absolutely a joy to work with, they go above and beyond... I cannot praise them enough; the manager and staff make my job easier.'

Staff receive appropriate training to support children effectively. This has recently included training to improve staff's understanding of childhood trauma-informed practice. New staff receive an in-depth, good-quality induction that includes face-to-face training. This provides staff with additional knowledge and skills in how to keep children safe and provide them with good-quality care.

Staff benefit from an environment that supports and encourages learning and development. Supervision takes place regularly and provides staff with effective challenge and support. New staff receive regular supervision to help them understand their roles and responsibilities and to develop their practice to keep children safe. This means that staff's practice and professional development are monitored effectively.

Children understand their rights and understand how to make a complaint. The registered manager ensures that any concerns raised by children are quickly investigated and addressed. Children have feedback regarding the outcome of their complaint. This assures children that any issues they raise are taken seriously.

Overall, the manager takes appropriate steps to notify Ofsted of all serious incidents. However, on one occasion, the registered manager did not do so. The manager acknowledges this oversight and the importance of notifying the regulator of significant events.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40 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. ('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: SC063815

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Walsall Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: PO Box 15, Walsall WS1 1TP

Responsible individual: Jivan Sembi

Registered manager: Lois Stevens

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

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