

SC064472

Registered provider: Willows (Devon) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a small organisation and is registered to provide care for up to three children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that care is provided for children with social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 7 September 2021.

Three children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2023

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: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/03/2020	Full	Good
24/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is well presented and in an idyllic setting. It provides beautiful spaces for children to relax in. Renovation and redecoration have been undertaken since the previous inspection and are ongoing. A bathroom replacement has been completed to a high standard and one of the lounges is currently being redecorated.

Staff develop positive relationships with children. They know children well and speak knowledgeably about them. The children said that they really care about the staff team and love living at the home.

Children do very well in education. They attend every day and have made good progress in GCSEs and functional skills. They took part in a successful school play in December.

Children know what to do if they have a complaint. Managers respond well to complaints and these are investigated thoroughly. The registered manager advocates for children. The registered manager sourced a private advocate for one child to share their views about their future when the local authority could not provide this resource.

Staff encourage children to be independent and gain life skills in line with their age and understanding. Children also have opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities. One child said that they are lucky to have so many things to do and that staff support them in doing things they enjoy.

Difficult relationships between children have proved challenging since the last inspection. Staff manage these relationships well. However, the home would benefit from a clear strategy for staff to follow, to ensure a consistent response to helping children to resolve these difficulties. There is a risk that one child may have to leave the home if the children's relationships with one another are not repaired.

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

The home has responded robustly to support the safety of one child with significant health concerns. The registered manager has challenged external professionals to ensure that the child receives the most appropriate support. There are good monitoring and review systems in place to ensure that staff closely monitor the child's condition so that any changes are clearly recorded and reviewed. However, staff would benefit from specialised training regarding supporting children who self-harm.

When children go missing from the home, staff respond effectively and write detailed recordings of the incidents. Staff have useful discussions with children when

they return home, to try to understand their behaviour and prevent further episodes.

Restraint has been used twice since the last inspection. This has been used to keep children and staff safe. Staff make detailed records of these incidents. Managers have sensitive reflections with children and staff to ensure that lessons are learned. One child told the inspector that, although restraint rarely happened, they did not think it should take place at all.

Children's plans are comprehensive. They clearly identify and assess risk. They provide staff with clear information and guidance about a child's needs and appropriate strategies to respond to their behaviours effectively.

The home has good practices to ensure that medication is stored appropriately and safely. Predominately, staff record the administration of medication accurately. There was one minor omission noted but this had no impact on the child. Staff take measures to ensure that children can safely take medication. When one child was storing tablets rather than swallowing them, staff requested liquid alternatives.

Staff respond sensitively and calmly during incidents involving a child who has self-harm behaviours. However, the child was moved without warning or explanation to respite accommodation for approximately one week. This has caused the child to feel significant resentment towards the registered manager and their relationship has been negatively impacted by the lack of open communication.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a significant change in staffing since the last inspection. This has had a negative impact on one child, who has felt unsettled by this. This has now been resolved by recruiting a stable staff team.

Managers strongly advocate for children and challenge plans when they do not meet children's needs. A local authority social worker told the inspector that the home communicates well with them, highlights the views of the child during meetings and will challenge plans that are not right for the child.

The home has a robust recruitment process that helps to recruit the most suitable adults to care for children. There is a thorough induction programme for new staff, followed by a supportive probationary period. New staff told the inspector that they feel very supported by the whole team, particularly the registered manager. All staff have access to regular, good-quality supervision.

The registered manager has very good oversight of the care children receive. They understand the risks and vulnerabilities but also the strengths of each child. They support children to make progress and have high aspirations for them.

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, 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 children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This relates specifically to children being involved in plans for their care and being able to express their views about the plans.	28 April 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that all staff have suitable skills to meet the needs of children, including specialist training to better understand and respond to self-harm behaviours.	28 April 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—	28 April 2023

mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(b)) This relates to staff following clear guidance and responding consistently to children to promote positive and respectful relationships.	
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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: SC064472

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Willows (Devon) Ltd

Registered provider address: Old Farm House, Gussage St. Michael, Wimborne, Dorset BH21 5JE

Responsible individual: Carolyn Coombes

Registered manager: Michelle Tickner

Inspector

Penelope Kutz, Social Care Inspector

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