

SC064472

Registered provider: Willows (Devon) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three girls who may experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 7 September 2021.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2023	Full	Good
21/02/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/03/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Carers know children well and understand their plans. Carers listen to children and set clear boundaries about what is expected. While some children do not always like the boundaries set, they understand the rules and the reasons for the carers' actions.

Children make good progress from their starting points. Both children receive education and have consistently good attendance at school. The home has high aspirations for the children, and both children are achieving well. The children took part in a recent Christmas show, and their achievements were celebrated by their carers and a wider team of staff.

A positive family style atmosphere is encouraged. Children sit together with carers and each other for meals and take turns to cook. This has helped to develop their independence. Meals are home-cooked and nutritious. Carers support the children to try new experiences and develop interests and hobbies. The children are asked to give suggestions for outings and activities, and they are supported to understand the value of these. Children are praised appropriately when they take part.

Children are supported well to move in and out of this home; the impact on the child moving and on the other children is carefully considered. Children's views are obtained in respect of children moving in and out. Leaders and managers work closely with other professionals to ensure these moves are planned. For one child moving out, a positive ending was promoted, and the needs of the other children were considered sensitively.

The home is well presented and has a warm and comfortable feel. Plans for improving the home are underway, with some rooms currently being decorated. Children are supported to keep their rooms tidy and are involved in the day-to-day running of the home.

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

When there are worries about children, carers respond appropriately. For example, when children go missing from home, carers know what to do. They follow the right processes to return the children home swiftly. Carers work effectively with other professionals and have conversations with the child to reduce this reoccurring.

Appropriate care is taken when children self-harm. Carers have had training in this and know how to respond, including searching for items, giving first aid and providing emotional support. Physical interventions have been used on four occasions since the last inspection. These have been necessary to keep children and/or carers safe and have been for short periods of time.

Records relating to children's safety are comprehensive and detailed. The manager has good oversight of these incidents and is able to track and understand patterns. The manager is proactive when reviewing incidents and takes decisive action, for example contacting local shops in relation to selling alcohol or energy drinks to the children.

The police have been called on occasion. A system has evolved where the police have asked the home to report all instances of assault on carers to assist them even when charges are not brought. This is not a child-focused approach and needs review.

Carers work hard to create and maintain positive relationships between the children. This is challenging at times. Appropriate decisions are made when leaders and managers recognise that they can no longer meet the needs of the children safely alongside each other. They work with other professionals and the children to ensure that endings are sensitively managed.

A delay occurred in reporting allegations made about a professional who works in the wider organisation to the appropriate agency. There was no impact on the children involved. However, there needs to be a review of the arrangements for managing complaints and allegations that children make about professionals in the wider organisation to ensure actions are completed in accordance with child protection procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has high aspirations for the children and knows these children well. She has good systems in place for monitoring the quality of care and ensuring tasks are completed.

Carers are provided with good support that enables them to do their job effectively, for example a good induction, bespoke training and regular and reflective supervision. They have opportunities to meet and discuss issues as a team. Carers appreciate this support, and morale is good.

The manager advocates strongly for the children and challenges other professionals when services are not provided or do not meet their needs effectively. For one child, the manager made a formal complaint to challenge decisions being made regarding funding the child's school place. She tried to find alternative ways to support a child's mental health and was tenacious when the first option was not successful. Professionals speak positively about the manager's communication with them.

The provider has a thorough system in place for the safe recruitment of staff. Agency staff have not been used, providing consistency of care in the organisation for the children.

Previous requirements have been addressed, and the manager is reflective on feedback and accepting of learning.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should agree with their local police force the procedures and guidance on police involvement with the home. In particular, this means that the current procedure of informing the police about every assault on a member of staff should be reviewed so that any incident that would not normally be reported if it occurred in a family home would not be reported. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.40)
- The registered person should ensure that children are listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. In particular, the registered person must review the current arrangements for managing allegations made about the wider organisation or school and ensure actions taken by the designated safeguarding lead are suitably independent. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.17)

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
BH21 5JE

Responsible individual: Carolyn Coombes

Registered manager: Michelle Tickner

Inspectors

Nickie Doney, Social Care Inspector
Paula Lahey, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024