

SC067810

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to seven children with social and emotional difficulties.

The home was registered with Ofsted in 2006, and the manager registered in 2017. The registered manager is suitably qualified and manages another children's home in the organisation.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. Three children contributed their views to the inspection.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 28 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/02/2024	Full	Good
28/02/2023	Full	Good
04/08/2021	Full	Good
26/06/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive a high standard of care and have made considerable progress from their individual starting points. They are well settled and have established positive, trusting relationships with staff who have a thorough understanding of their needs. Staff consistently speak about the children with warmth and celebrate their progress and achievements, fostering a supportive and nurturing environment.

The registered manager and staff have high aspirations for all children, supporting them to attend and succeed in their education. Staff celebrate children's efforts and achievements, which helps to raise their confidence and motivation. As a result, most children are making excellent progress. Notably, one child, who had been out of education for a significant period of time, is now attending college regularly and actively engaging in their course. For children who are reluctant to engage in education, staff find alternative opportunities, such as work experience and training courses, ensuring that all children continue their learning and development.

Children's health and emotional well-being are well understood by staff, who work closely with an in-house therapist to address children's specific needs. The therapist provides individualised support, helping children work through personal challenges and to build emotional resilience. This has enabled children to reflect on their experiences and has led to positive outcomes, including improved self-esteem with a positive outlook of the future.

Staff 'go the extra mile' in the way a good parent would. When children are upset, staff create safe spaces and opportunities for 'real talk', which allows them to express their emotions openly and honestly. This empathetic approach has meant that challenging behaviours and incidents are rare in the home because children feel supported and understood.

Children's moves into the home are exceptionally well planned, ensuring that their needs are prioritised. For example, the registered manager made the thoughtful decision to transfer a child from the sister home, rather than moving them to an unfamiliar environment. This has ensured that the child has benefited from maintaining connections with familiar staff and surroundings, which has provided stability and continuity.

Staff actively encourage children to participate in a wide range of enjoyable activities, including children's personal hobbies such as skating and volleyball competitions. Outings to theme parks, cinemas and go-karting are regularly organised. These opportunities contribute to children's overall enjoyment and personal growth.

The home is a warm and nurturing environment where children can relax and enjoy quality time with both staff and peers. The presence of pets, including a cat and fish, creates a sense of normality and comfort for the children, helping to foster a calming and familiar atmosphere. The well-maintained and beautiful fish tank, along with other homely touches, contributes to the overall family-like setting, reinforcing a sense of belonging and emotional security for the children.

Three children gave excellent feedback about the registered manager and staff, highlighting their positive experiences of living in the home. They said that their wishes and feelings are actively heard and valued, with opportunities to share their views about the home environment. This gives children a keen sense of belonging and creates strong ties with the staff.

Staff work proactively and positively with parents and former carers to promote meaningful and safe contact and continuity of care, whenever this is appropriate and achievable.

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

Risk management strategies are clearly outlined in children's risk assessments, and staff demonstrate a strong understanding of each child's individual risks, needs and triggers. This helps staff to prevent risks from escalating. As a result, the number of incidents, including missing-from-care episodes, is kept low, which has increased children's safety and well-being.

Since the last inspection, there has only been one incident, during which appropriate actions were taken to safeguard the child. Staff took prompt action, and their response addressed the safeguarding concerns that had arisen effectively. It also demonstrated a strong relationship between the child's parent and the registered manager, who was available to support during the incident, even though it was during the early hours of the morning.

When children go missing from the home, staff take appropriate action and make efforts to contact and locate the children. They show curiosity to understand the reasons behind children's missing-from-care episodes and offer comfort and warmth when a child returns home. Return home interviews are consistently requested and take place, which further helps staff to understand the reasons behind children's missing-from-care episodes. Furthermore, the number of children's missing-from-care episodes have decreased, which demonstrates that children feel comfortable to live and spend time at the home.

Children's case records, including key-work sessions, reflect their everyday lives. They are meaningful and address children's risks, needs and experiences well. These sessions are goal-oriented, which staff use to reinforce positive behaviour. Children's wishes and feelings are listened to and respected, and the sessions are beneficial for them.

The registered manager has reviewed local area risks and has built strong working relationships with safeguarding professionals, including the police. A child exploitation police officer has said that the registered manager consults with them and takes appropriate action when safeguarding concerns arise. This enhances the safety and well-being of children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager and staff have high aspirations for children. The registered manager is very experienced and brings great passion to her role. She is committed to providing a range of positive experiences for children and ensures that they get the best possible care. An effective deputy manager and team leader strongly support her.

The registered manager and staff have developed strong relationships with children's parents, social workers and schools. Parents and social workers consistently provide excellent feedback, highlighting exceptional communication and support from the registered manager and staff, which has significantly contributed to positive outcomes for children. This enables them to work together to safeguard children effectively and ensures that children receive the necessary support to thrive.

Safeguarding incidents are rare in the home. Safeguarding practices are robust, with managers and staff taking safeguarding concerns seriously and acting promptly when issues arise. This significantly enhances children's safety and well-being. Furthermore, the regulator is notified of any concerns, facilitating regulatory oversight.

Staff complete appropriate mandatory training, equipping them to meet the needs of the children in their care effectively. Staff receive annual appraisals and regular supervision that is focused on children's individual needs and experiences. Supervision is also reflective, which further supports staff member's practice and development. This enables the registered manager to have oversight of staff performance and any areas of development.

Staff receive effective support and challenge during team meetings, which include reflective sessions with the in-house therapist. These sessions encourage staff to explore how their own feelings may mirror those of the children, allowing staff a deeper understanding of children's deep-rooted feelings and experiences. This enables staff to reflect on their practices, share learning and develop practice that benefits the children in their care.

No requirements or recommendations have been made.

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: SC067810

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Herman Allen

Registered manager: Michelle Nicholson

Inspector

Amena Begum, Social Care Inspector

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