

SC355755

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 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: 1 August 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2023	Full	Good
21/09/2022	Full	Good
19/05/2021	Full	Good
24/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in this home have warm, natural relationships with staff, who understand their vulnerabilities and needs. Staff make every effort to get to know the children and they provide consistent and nurturing care. Children develop a sense of stability and belonging. The inspector spoke with both children, who were positive about the care they receive. One child said: 'Staff are good to me and look after me.'

Children said they know that staff want what is best for them and are helped to build relationships. Staff understand the importance of family, and family relationships. Staff work with outside agencies to increase opportunities for children to visit appropriate family members. Children see their families, and this is evidenced in individual memory books, which include photos of the children's time spent with people who are important to them.

Staff facilitate opportunities for children to learn. When an education provision is not in place, staff advocate for the rights of children. Their right to an education is paramount. Staff consistently challenge authorities, and work closely with them, to offer new and creative opportunities for children. This helps children to continue to learn and make progress. Staff went above and beyond to help one child gain a recognised qualification that will enhance their chances of employment as an adult.

Children's achievements are celebrated, and they can work towards rewards. Children go on caravan holidays, visit theme parks, and relax with staff in local cafes. As in a family home, children can bake and cook and are supported by staff to gain independence skills. Children feel this meets their needs. One child said they were well prepared to start being more independent and there was 'no stress.'

Children's views and wishes are listened to and responded to. Their views and wishes are discussed at staff meetings and children receive positive feedback. Staff also create a cheerful and colourful 'My Month' review booklet for children. This shows children taking part in activities, celebrates achievements and reflects plans for the children's futures.

Children have prompt access to local services. Their health and well-being needs are met. As children progress, they are offered the opportunity to manage their own medicines. When they decline to do so, this is supported by staff. Where children have additional or complex health needs, the manager ensures the right people are involved in their care so that staff know how to support them.

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

Children said they felt 'so safe and looked after' and were glad they live in this home.

Staff have a good understanding of the needs of the children, including how past experiences have affected them. Care plans and risk assessments reflect the known individual risks to children. These assessments are regularly reviewed to reflect progress or concerns and are discussed with children. This allows children to take managed risks appropriate to their age. Children are encouraged and supported to understand risk and learn how to keep themselves safe.

The physical environment for children is safe. Health and safety risk assessments show a clear understanding and management of risks in the home. There is consultation with the relevant people. The manager has a good understanding of the local area. She knows the community issues that may cause risks to children and the actions that are required from adults to keep children safe.

When children are at risk of harm, additional support is put in place to keep children safe. The staff, supported by senior management, liaise with outside agencies, including social workers, specialist support teams and the police. This multi-agency approach to care, alongside therapeutic support, ensures that clear plans, boundaries, and expectations are in place. The actions taken by managers and staff have contributed to a reduction in risk for children.

There are plans in place to reduce harm, including when children go missing from home. Missing-from-home plans are clear and detailed. They direct staff to the right course of action. Staff understand these plans and are confident that they can support children and keep them safe. Staff want children to return home safely and actively look for children when they are missing. However, a decision taken by the previous management team during one missing-from-home episode did not promote the welfare of children. Children were not supported to return home as quickly as possible. This action could have posed a risk to children.

Staff are trained to physically intervene to keep children safe. Physical intervention is only used as a last resort. Staff have additional skills and training in de-escalation, understanding trauma, self-harm, and exploitation. However, on one occasion a staff member did not document that they had used a physical intervention technique to move a child to safety. The manager was made aware two days after the incident. This delay did not allow the manager to review and monitor the intervention or support the child in a timely manner.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

This home benefits from a new, but experienced and motivated management team. The manager and deputy manager have been instrumental in ensuring children continue to be safe and are listened to. They offer appropriate support to the staff and manage the

home to a high standard. There is a drive and passion to provide the right care for children. Staff are highly ambitious for children to succeed.

Exceptionally positive feedback was received from professionals and parents who visit the children. They describe feeling welcomed into a warm and loving family home, where staff have good relationships with children. Several professionals commented that the new management team has improved communication and has had a positive impact on the children's lives. The manager consistently uses her knowledge and contacts with outside agencies to build and enhance appropriate care for children. Staff describe an approachable and supportive manager, who alongside the deputy manager has created a stable and safe environment for children to thrive.

Systems have been improved to ensure there is comprehensive management oversight of all areas of the home. Regular audits help the manager to ensure that the quality of care is maintained. There are monthly visits to the home by an independent person. Any resulting actions from the visit are responded to and viewed as a valuable tool for reviewing quality. The manager has a very good understanding of what children need, and what support and experiences they need to progress. The manager actively challenges anyone who fails to meet her high standards and is a caring and professional role model for her staff.

Processes have been embedded that ensure staff now receive regular supportive supervision sessions. Staff say that supportive supervision sessions are helpful and encourage their learning and development. Staff training and skills are appropriate to meet the needs of children. Meetings are held regularly and there is good attendance by the staff. Children are a focus of the meetings. Research-based care has been introduced into the home and this supports the development of staff practice. This research-based approach to care is incorporated into the children's care plans.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet The Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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 their full potential; and promotes their welfare. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when children who were missing from home are found, they make suitable and effective arrangements to enable the children to return home as soon as possible.	30 November 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint are kept that enable the registered person 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. These records should be made as soon as possible after the event has taken place. ('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: SC355755

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Registered provider address: Malvern View, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4AD

Responsible individual: Leanne Smith

Registered manager: Lisa Sykes

Inspector

Jo Cansfield, Social Care Inspector

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