

SC382730

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home offers short breaks for up to 5 children with social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities. It is owned and operated by a local authority.

The manager is suitably qualified and has been registered with Ofsted since February 2025.

At the time of the inspection, 3 children were staying in the home. The inspector spoke with 2 children and observed their interactions with staff.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 February 2026

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: 28 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2025	Full	Good
03/05/2023	Full	Good
22/08/2022	Full	Good
02/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous inspection in January 2025, 38 children have received a planned short break and 13 children have received immediate short breaks. Three children have stayed beyond the maximum 17 days allowed for short-break stays. However, these delays were informed by children's individual needs and were intentionally planned to ensure children experienced a single, planned move.

The home provides a welcoming and nurturing environment for children during their stays. Children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms when they stay. This approach supports children to settle into the home quickly and to feel safe and secure. One child said in their feedback about the home, 'It is my second home.' Leaders and staff regularly ask children to share their views to inform ongoing improvements to the home environment. This ensures children feel heard and enhances their experiences when they come to stay.

Managers and staff take time, wherever possible, to get to know children before their stay to understand their needs and their routines. When children express interests, staff work creatively to identify opportunities for children to access new experiences to build on these interests, developing their confidence and self-esteem.

Educational progress is prioritised when children stay. Staff ensure that children are transported to their educational settings every day and that they attend school with everything they need. Leaders and staff work effectively with representatives from children's schools to ensure that communication is clear. A representative from the home will consistently attend children's review meetings to ensure they understand the child's current educational plan and needs. One education provider said, '[Name of child] is always well presented, cared for and arrives to school with good lunches and looking smart.'

Children's views are captured effectively through a range of forums, including 'Your Say', 'What Happened' and 'My Ideas' forms. Children receive individual newsletters following their stays, which recognise their achievements and clearly explain how and to whom they can share their views with. These approaches support children to directly contribute to decisions about their care and help ensure that their experiences inform and shape practice.

Children's targets are clearly identified in their short-break plans and align with their local authority plans of care. Staff and leaders work effectively with a range of professionals involved in children's lives to support children, their families and wider support networks to achieve identified outcomes. As a result, children experience consistent and coordinated care.

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

Individualised behaviour support plans and risk assessments are in place to guide staff in supporting the children. Leaders and staff do not, however, consistently review and update risk assessments to ensure that the actions taken to help and protect children are proportionate to the level of risk they display. This has led to missed opportunities to identify when children would benefit from planned sessions with staff to develop their resilience to risk.

Leaders review all incidents of physical restraint to ensure that practice is proportionate and that children experience the least restrictive intervention necessary to maintain their safety. Where children are identified as being at increased risk of requiring restrictive practice, individual positive handling plans are in place. These provide staff with clear guidance to meet each child's specific needs and to support their safety and wellbeing.

There is positive practice around prescription medication. Regular medication audits take place, and this supports the registered manager and staff to ensure that there is good practice in this home. Medication is stored appropriately, and records are maintained for each individual child. When new health needs for children are identified when they are staying at the home, appropriate action is taken by staff to ensure that children do not experience any unnecessary delay in accessing appropriate medical care.

When children raise concerns about their peers, staff complete planned work with all children to reinforce the home's expectations around positive and safe behaviour. The registered manager responds to all complaints and concerns raised by children promptly and ensures that they are offered advocacy and additional support. As a result, children feel listened to and confident that their concerns are taken seriously and acted on, helping them to feel safe while living at the home.

Staff recruitment procedures are thorough. This helps to ensure that staff working at the home are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager understands that progress is different for each child, and she provides opportunities for each child to support them to make progress. She has positive aspirations for children's future and works hard to ensure that children can make progress from their starting points.

Staff development is prioritised. The registered manager has good insight into the strengths and areas for development of her staff team. Staff have regular supervision, annual appraisals and clear development plans. Staff benefit from regular team meetings that have a consistent focus on staff wellbeing. As a result, staff speak positively about the management team and the support they receive both professionally and personally.

Leaders and managers respond promptly when there are concerns about staff practice, which has a positive impact on the safety and quality of care the children receive. Managers ensure that the appropriate professionals are informed, and when required, disciplinary processes are followed. This robust practice not only supports children to receive consistent, good-quality care but also promotes children's safety.

The home has a core team of staff who are working consistently with the children. Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs and how to care for them. Staff said that they enjoy working in this home.

The registered manager strives to have positive and effective working relationships with professionals and partner agencies. Relationships with children's families are prioritised. Parents said, 'They have given us a fighting chance for us all to take a breath,' and another stated, 'I really needed the support, and it has helped us all so much.' This feedback demonstrates the positive impact the home has in supporting families, helping to prevent breakdowns in children's care arrangements and providing essential support to children and their carers.

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and take effective action whenever there is a concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi)) This specifically relates to the review of children's individual risk assessments and guidance provided to staff caring for children on how they can work with children to reduce risk.	20 March 2026

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: SC382730

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Shropshire Council

Registered provider address: Shirehall, Abbey Foregate, Shrewsbury SY2 6ND

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Jessica Love-Dales

Inspector

Charlotte Tippet, Social Care Inspector

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