

SC386003

Registered provider: Appletree Treatment Centre Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider. It offers care for up to five children between the ages of six and 12 years who may experience social, emotional or mental health difficulties, as well as associated or specific learning difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2019.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 June 2025

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: 12 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2024	Full	Good
20/06/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2022	Full	Good
20/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are progressing in all areas of their lives, helped by the positive, nurturing relationships that they develop with the staff team. Several professionals described the children's progress as 'amazing', 'brilliant' and 'could not ask for better'.

Consultation with children is a strength of the home. Staff use a range of methods, including children's group meetings and individual questionnaires that use symbols, to make it easier for the children to share their views. All the children spoken to said that they are happy to be living at the home.

Staff understand children's individual needs and know what is important to them. Children understand who they can talk to if they have any concerns.

The care plans for each child illustrate their experiences during their time living at the home. They guide staff with clear strategies to care for the child and meet their needs. This includes staff helping children to maintain relationships with family and friends. Key-work sessions help the child understand their behaviour, along with sessions with the organisation's therapy team.

Staff understand that education is important. The children attend the provider's school, and they all achieve high levels of attendance. One child said that they love the school. The children's progress is evident, as half of the group has moved up a class in the last year because of their achievements.

Transitions to and from the home are well planned and involve discussions with children about new children coming to live at the home. However, the management team's risk assessments before children come to live at the home do not provide enough information or evaluation of the group's risks. This was identified at the last inspection and continues to be a shortfall.

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

Children say that they feel safe in the home. Risks are managed, and risk assessments include risk management strategies to support staff. The assessments show progress over time, with risks decreasing for most children.

Children rarely go missing from the home, but when they do, staff actively look for them and contact known people before reporting the child as missing. When incidents have occurred, they have been for a short time, and children are welcomed back and supported to explore the reasons why they left the home.

On occasion, staff hold children to help them cope with their overwhelming feelings and emotions. Staff employ de-escalation and distraction strategies to assist children before resorting to holding or guiding them away from situations. The records are

clear about what has happened in each case and demonstrate discussions with staff and children after an incident. Records show a decrease in the necessity of holding all children. Sometimes, the records are short and leave the reader asking questions. This could lead to confusion and inconsistency in practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager and deputy are experienced professionals who are visible in the home and in the lives of the children. Staff feel supported by management and can voice any concerns.

The manager has effective monitoring and consultation processes in place.

Staff have regular supervision sessions and team meetings to support them and their practice, including discussions with the therapy team. However, records of supervision sessions do not demonstrate the level of discussion that staff say they have. Some entries consist of only a sentence or a single word, which does not assist staff in reflecting on and learning from their supervision sessions. Children are not always discussed, resulting in missed opportunities to share working practices.

Training takes place regularly, and all mandatory training is up to date. Staff are supported to complete their qualification and training in the organisation's model of care, which helps to develop consistent practice. However, there are gaps in the training related to the specific needs of the children living at the home.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)) In particular, ensure that impact risk assessments consider the risks associated with the child potentially moving to the home alongside those associated with each child already living at the home and vice versa. The assessment should demonstrate the staff team's skills in meeting the child's needs and outline what is required to ensure that those needs are met.	30 July 2025
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) (2)(a)) In particular, ensure that staff receive training relating to self-harm and sexually harmful behaviour.	31 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the information in children's records is detailed and extensive enough to be helpful to the reader. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that notes from supervision sessions are detailed and that sessions are delivered in line with Regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

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: SC386003

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Appletree Treatment Centre Limited

Registered provider address: Meathop Park, Meathop, Grange-over-Sands, Cumbria
LA11 6RF

Responsible individual: Rowan Knapton

Registered manager: Russell Clement

Inspector

Susan Atkinson-Millmoor, Social Care Inspector

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