

SC393567

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. Its statement of purpose specifies that it provides care and accommodation for up to five young people, aged between nine and 18 years.

There has been no registered manager in post since March 2021

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 February 2022

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: 3 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/09/2019	Full	Outstanding
06/06/2018	Full	Good
05/07/2017	Full	Good
17/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The care given to children at this home is outstanding. Children make exceptional progress, and this is made possible by a staff team that is dedicated to supporting children and promoting their continued development. Children are provided with heart-warming and dedicated person-centred care that helps them to make excellent progress.

Staff maintain exceptional levels of professional conduct. They deliver high levels of care using friendly and parenting approaches to care. They use a playful and curious approach to encourage children to talk about difficult conversations. As a result, children who struggled to communicate openly and reflect on their emotions are now able to express their views and admit to making unsafe decisions while exploring ways to resolve issues.

Before children move into this home, the needs of other children currently living there are carefully considered. Staff consider their age, interests, family dynamics and how they would strive as a group and individually. All children's views and wishes are considered, and child-focused plans are implemented with arrangements obtained for children to meet the child potentially moving in. All children engage in group activities to initiate relationship building, and welcome celebrations are held for the new child. This reduces anxieties for children and gives them a sense of belonging and being part of the new community from the onset.

Staff support children to engage and make exceptional progress in their education. They work closely with the school to ensure that consistency is maintained in the approach to the care and support given to children. The school's mental health team also provides support that helps stabilise children's emotional and behavioural needs. Its support also guides staff to use approaches that are in line with the mental health needs of the children in the home.

Children have access to a wide range of recreational activities. Staff encourage children to independently explore different activities in the local area and beyond, where they meet new people and make new friends. Children have also been supported to engage with the wider community through giving their unwanted clothes to the local air ambulance and taking part in the local community's environmental awareness day.

Children have fun playing with peers and staff at home and in the community. One child said, 'The best thing about living here is that I get to play football outside almost every day.' This supports the children to integrate into the community and gives them a sense of belonging.

Children are cared for by an exceptionally motivated staff team. Staff promote a sense of pride in the children. Staff effectively support children to develop their independence skills. These skills are carefully selected in accordance with their age groups and abilities. One child proudly informed the inspector how he had applied for his bank account and passport and was looking forward to using them. Another child confidently shared his experience of travelling to visit his family and friends alone, and he is planning to complete further life skills to help him when he moves on.

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

Staff are highly attentive and protective. They ensure that children are safe and feel protected from harm. Staff have implemented plans that support them work alongside children to identify possible risks and how they can reduce or manage them. This gives children the ability to independently identify risks and explore measures to keep themselves safe.

Children rarely go missing. When children have gone missing, staff have reacted swiftly by following them and returning them back home safely. In-depth conversations have occurred where staff have supported children to reflect on safer ways to access the community. Staff have used this space to help children strike the right balance between keeping safe and supporting them to measure risks. Staged and planned independent social time has enabled the children to develop independence, take age-appropriate risks and reduce missing-from-home episodes.

Staff know how to address reported concerns. Reported concerns by parents and school have been taken seriously, even when they have not occurred in the home or in the care of staff. Excellent multi-agency working is practised. Leaders, managers and staff share reviewed plans, restrictions to be given to children to keep them and others safe and actions to be taken to help address concerns. On occasions, this has included liaising with the police and the local authority designated officer. Where other agencies are not able to share information due to investigation procedures, the manager has kept well-documented logs and ensured that sensitive discussions are held with the children involved to assure and educate them without contaminating evidence.

When children struggle with emotional difficulties, staff support them in a compassionate and consistent manner. They use excellent de-escalation measures and encourage children to self-regulate, with physical intervention used as a last resort. Staff reflect on incidents with children and support them to review their child-friendly behavioural plans. Where damages have occurred through unsettled behaviours, children are supported to explore ways of helping with the repairs. This helps children to take pride in their environment, feel secure and confidently talk about their emotions and feelings with staff.

Recruitment procedures are extremely thorough. Leaders and managers adhere to the safer recruitment processes when employing staff. As a result, children are cared for by staff who can keep them safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A new manager has been appointed. He has made extensive changes to the procedures in the home and has implemented plans aimed at improving the care of children.

The manager knows the children well. He has a very good vision for the progress of the home, children and the staff team. He has implemented outstanding progress tracking systems which are highly influenced by children's input and hence capture their voices in identifying archivable weekly targets. Staff support children to complete the set targets in line with their care plans. As a result, children work alongside staff, leaders and the manager to track progress and celebrate achievements.

Staff are well supported and provided with opportunities to progress to higher roles within the organisation. Staff and the manager receive regular supervisions and practice meetings aimed at improving performance, addressing concerns and supporting staff to reflect on the progress made by children. Upskilling work and training are provided where staff complete diplomas that help them progress to leadership roles.

The manager is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses. He has identified areas for improvement and acted on them. For example, when a child who moved into the home was not suitably matched, the manager implemented an excellent 'dynamic assessment plan' where children, staff, professionals and parents were consulted. This resulted in a well-supported ending for the child, which has had a positive impact on the progress and experience of children.

The manager promotes equality, diversity and inclusion effectively. Children are supported by staff to complete identity profiles that help them explore their uniqueness and that of their family background. Children attend events such as the organisation's Gay Pride, where they enjoy the celebrations while learning to accept others in their community.

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: SC393567

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Robert Page

Registered manager: Glen Strowbridge

Inspector

Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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