

SC408655

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a large national provider. It provides accommodation and care for up to seven children who may have a learning difficulty and/or autism spectrum disorder.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in February 2022.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 July 2022

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: 7 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/09/2021	Full	Good
11/06/2019	Full	Good
06/12/2018	Full	Good
09/08/2018	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy meaningful and caring relationships with staff. When children come home from school, staff greet them with a warm and enthusiastic welcome. This helps to engage them and makes their daily routines fun and exciting. Children benefit from a team who know them well and have the skills to enable them to develop their independence and communication skills. Children are able to enjoy a homely environment and grounds which are designed to enhance their enjoyment of the home. A parent told the inspector that staff are 'warm, loving and compassionate' and understand their child's personality.

Children are recognised as individuals and through close working with families cultural events are celebrated as they would be at home. Regular cultural evenings celebrate different cultures and festivals. Children enjoy trying different activities linked to countries' traditional celebrations, such as arts and crafts or learning about national dress, as well as trying traditional foods.

Children develop their social skills while living in the home, including making personal choices, spending time with each other and sharing the space and play equipment. Individual goals and targets are clear and their progress against these is celebrated. Staff understand each child's communication style and enable children to share their views, and advocate for them as appropriate. They support children to develop their communication and encourage this through their day-to-day living.

Close working with schools ensures consistency across the settings and that children are supported to learn in a way that best meets their individual needs. Children who are struggling to manage full days at school are supported effectively to engage in extra activities in the home, with staff supporting them in school for events such as the school fun day.

Children's time at the home is fondly remembered and celebrated. The home has many photos of the children enjoying themselves in the home and in the community. Personalised memory books celebrate their time in the home and memory boxes prompt discussions about times they have enjoyed. This helps children feel loved and part of the home.

Children are helped to develop healthier lifestyles through joint working with health staff in the school and community. Children are provided with a range of physical activities and sensory diets, in addition to trying a wider range of foods. Strong links in the local community have led to a child being able to now have a more age-appropriate haircut at a local barbers. This was achieved by careful planning and several trips that helped to build the child's tolerance and confidence in the surroundings.

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

Children are confident in their interactions with staff and their actions show they feel safe in their home. Staff know each child's vulnerabilities and care is planned in order to keep children safe. Staff understand how to respond to any safeguarding or child protection concerns and how to escalate or use whistle-blowing processes if necessary. Their awareness of their roles and responsibilities has been heightened through recent organisation-wide concerns and they have reflected on their practice as a result. Records show particularly strong joint working with partner agencies when there are any concerns for a child's safety or welfare. Parents feel involved in the care their child receives and feel that their child is safe while at the home.

Staff are skilled at recognising when children are becoming unsettled and redirect them to other activities to prevent them becoming over-stimulated or anxious. Staff provide comfort and support should children become upset or agitated. This good practice is underpinned by comprehensive and effective support plans. The consistency in approach means children know what is expected of them and that adults will help them calm and be safe.

Staff recognise all behaviour as communication and use communication tools and their knowledge of the child to help them let the child know what behaviour is expected. Pictorial debriefs and social stories allow children to explore how they were feeling and for staff to change approaches as needed. A high number of physical interventions have been recorded. However, these are mostly low-level hand-on-arm guides to a safer place or as distraction. Excellent monitoring of incidents has led to changes in plans and approaches to help support children better and reduce the need for physical intervention in times of upset or distress.

Children are protected from avoidable risk through sound safer recruitment practices. There is regular monitoring of the home's fire systems. Children know what to do should the alarm sound and staff are thoughtful in their approach to reducing anxiety during practice evacuations. The maintenance person for the home remains a valuable asset in maintaining the homeliness of the environment and fixing any damage as it occurs. As a result, the home is safe and welcoming, in line with a domestic setting. However, one child's bedroom does not have suitable blackout window coverings as per his therapy plan and there are insufficient cleaning facilities for when a child soils.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management team in the home is highly aspirational for the children in their care. Managers are ambitious and believe that all children should have the opportunities to succeed to the best of their abilities. They recognise when they can no longer meet the needs of a child and work tirelessly to ensure they move in a planned way to an appropriate placement and that staff give their all until the day the child moves on.

Staff and managers recognise the importance of working as a team to support children's development and outcomes. Joint working with partner agencies is a strength and helps ensure plans remain relevant and up to date. Children are recognised as individuals and their plans are regularly monitored to ensure they remain relevant and appropriately challenging for the child to progress. Parents and professionals are positive about the communication they receive from staff. Weekly reports, regular phone calls and visits to the home mean they feel part of the home and the children's lives. A planned barbecue and party for children and parents later in the summer aims to further develop this sense of community.

Staff feel valued and well supported by the managers in the home. Recent instability due to the absence of senior leaders in the wider organisation has been managed well and had little impact on the staff. The managers are now receiving the supervision and support they need after a period of flux. Staff say they have regular training and supervision and feel equipped to best support the children they care for. At times, the home struggles with reduced numbers of staff. However, the use of regular agency staff, who also benefit from supervision and training, means there are the required number of staff on each shift, so this has minimal impact on children.

The managers monitor the quality of care provided in the home effectively. Detailed reports by the independent visitor help inform areas for development. The manager also produces regular weekly, monthly and half-yearly reviews to ensure high standards are maintained. The service development plan remains under constant review to reduce drift in implementing actions to improve practice. However, it was noted that a reactive supervision and subsequent supervisions after an incident did not highlight the concerns or learning for the member of staff involved.

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, 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iv)(vii)) In particular, ensure there are suitable window coverings in bedrooms as per children's therapy plans and that there are suitable sluice facilities to meet the needs of the home.	31 August 2022
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—	31 August 2022

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))

In particular, ensure that all records of staff supervision and debriefs after incidents are clear and reflect the discussion that has taken place.

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: SC408655

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: Hannah Cox

Registered manager: Charlotte Gillett

Inspectors

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector
Matt Nicholls, Social Care Inspector

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