

SC412979

Registered provider: Aspiris New Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four children who may have special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2017 and is suitably experienced.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 21 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2023	Full	good
25/01/2022	Full	good
25/06/2019	Full	good
12/06/2018	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

At the time of the inspection, two children and two young people were living at the home. The two young people have lived at the home for a considerable length of time. Allowing the young people to live at the home after turning 18 has ensured that they have been able to complete their current education. Both young people are now due to move out, and the plans for these moves are at an advanced stage. The young people, their families and relevant others have contributed to the preparations for the children to leave.

Children make sustained progress in all areas of their life because of the care they receive. Staff know the children well and work hard to build excellent relationships with them. These relationships provide a solid foundation for children to flourish.

Children have made exceptional progress in being able to communicate with the people around them. This has enabled children to contribute to the decisions made about all aspects of their care. For example, staff have worked closely with a speech and language therapist for one child who had no verbal communication when he moved into the home. This child can now use some words to communicate. A social worker said, 'Because of the care he has received, he now has a voice.'

Children are in good health. Staff understand the individual health needs of the children well. The manager has effective oversight of the administration of children's prescribed medications and works closely with health professionals. For example, when one child's self-injurious behaviour increased after a change in medication, the manager identified this and escalated her views to the paediatrician. As a result, there was a swift review of the child's medication, which resulted in a stabilisation of the self-injurious behaviours.

Staff support the children to access education and develop their independence skills in line with their abilities. Staff communicate effectively with children's schools. Behaviour support strategies, communication aids and monthly targets are replicated between home and school. As a result, children experience consistency in care.

Staff nurture relationships between children and their families. This includes facilitating the children's time with their family and providing families with regular updates. The manager completes direct work with families to support their understanding of their child's evolving needs. This helps children to maintain important relationships and develops children's support networks for the future.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff take a conscientious approach to keeping children safe. Children's plans capture known risks and provide staff with clarity about the actions they need to take to keep each child safe. All known risks for the children have reduced as a result of the care provided by staff.

The manager regularly reviews the strategies in place to keep children safe. For example, one child was wearing a helmet in school to prevent injury when he banged his head. The manager identified that the child found it upsetting to wear a helmet and worked with school and introduced padded boards as an alternative to the helmet. This approach has reduced the child's anxiety and contributed to a reduction in the child's self-injurious behaviours.

Boundaries for children are clear, and positive behaviour is rewarded. Staff support children to manage difficult feelings safely, and as a result, unsafe behaviours have reduced. Physical intervention is used as a last resort to ensure that children are safe. The manager makes sure that all incidents are recorded and that debriefs are completed with staff and children after any incident. This ensures that practice in this area remains appropriate and safe.

Children are enabled to take risks in line with their individual abilities. This has included staff supporting children to become more independent and to access a range of activities. Staff encourage children to develop their own interests, which supports children's self-awareness, confidence and social skills.

The home is a physically safe place. The children benefit from a spacious and welcoming living environment. Health and safety risk assessments identify children's individual needs. For example, one child's personal evaluation plan details that in the event of a fire, he will be distressed. Clear instruction is given to staff on the type of communication aids to be used and strategies to reassure the child while getting him to a place of safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

A dedicated manager leads the home. The manager has a thorough understanding of the children's individual needs and the plans to promote their continued progress. The manager is supported by a deputy manager and an assistant manager. The manager challenges practice that is not in children's best interests and works through any shortfalls in practice with staff.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they have from the management team. Staff say they are proud to work in the home. They access high-quality supervision and team meetings that provide opportunities for learning and reflection. Staff training and development, which is embedded in research-based practice, ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs.

The manager and staff work together to understand children's changing needs. Staff feel included in the changes made to children's plans and routines. One staff member said that the manager helps the staff team to apply learning into the care it provides. For example, the manager cared for one child in the evening to support staff with changes in his routine and to show them how to use the agreed behaviour support approaches.

The manager proactively seeks out improvements in practice. This creates a culture in which learning is encouraged. The manager has used research-based practice to inform staffing arrangements and children's plans. For example, one child's experience of moving into the home was underpinned by research in relationship-based practice, trauma responses and positive transitions.

The management team builds strong working relationships with partner agencies, which promotes a team around the child approach. Feedback from professionals is extremely positive. A social worker identified that one child 'wouldn't be who he is today without them [the staff]'.

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: SC412979

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspiris New Education Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Wendy Sparling

Registered manager: Joanne Law

Inspector

Sally Griffiths, Social Care Inspector

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