

SC453726

Registered provider: Aston Children's Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

A new manager is in post, who registered with Ofsted in June 2025 and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Two children have moved in and two children have moved out during the inspection period.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 September 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: 2 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2024	Full	Good
18/07/2023	Full	Good
30/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from living in a home that is warm and welcoming. Improvements made since the last inspection create a homely atmosphere. Children's achievements are celebrated, promoting a sense of pride and belonging. Bedrooms are personalised to reflect children's individual interests. Staff provide children with opportunities to take on age-appropriate responsibilities, such as caring for the pet fish.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living in the home and are making progress from their starting points. Two children were spoken with, and both say they enjoy living in the home and feel supported by the staff who care for them. Children feel safe and are confident in expressing their views. Their opinions are actively sought through regular discussions with staff. They receive feedback about their requests to ensure they feel heard, and their views are valued.

Staff support children to maintain positive relationships. This practice supports children's identity and provides opportunities for them to enjoy time with people who are important to them. They enjoy participating in community-based activities such as Brownies and gymnastics. This helps them build peer relationships that develop their social skills.

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of children's educational needs. Where children are not in formal education, staff provide structured home learning activities tailored to individuals' abilities and interests. When a child did not attend education for a period, staff worked effectively with professionals to support the child's reintegration. This demonstrates the staff's commitment to promoting educational engagement and achievement.

The manager explores children's needs and considers clinical guidance when making decisions about a child moving into the home. Staff ensure that children are welcomed. They receive an innovative children's guide about the home that is narrated by a mascot.

One child's move from the home was unplanned due to escalating local risks. The other child benefited from a planned move to live with foster carers. Both moves were sensitively handled, with staff ensuring positive endings. For example, one child's departure was marked by a celebration involving staff and peers, promoting a sense of belonging.

Children's health needs are understood and supported by staff. They attend routine health appointments and are in good health. Leaders make appropriate referrals to specialist services when needed, and children benefit from regular sessions with therapists, which support their emotional well-being.

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

Staff understand children's needs and associated risks. They are supported by detailed risk management plans that provide clear guidance and promote therapeutic approaches to managing behaviour.

Allegations are taken seriously and investigated appropriately. However, there have been delays in sharing concerns, including late reporting to the manager, delayed contact with the local authority designated officer, and on one occasion, Ofsted was not informed. These shortfalls have been acknowledged by the current manager, who has taken steps to improve practice through additional staff training and upskilling.

Children know how to make complaints. Leaders and managers manage these swiftly and effectively, and they provide child-focused responses to children. When concerns have been raised by others, the manager has demonstrated strong multi-agency working to resolve issues raised.

Peer conflicts have occurred, including one incident where a child was harmed by another. Staff work to rebuild relationships and promote positive interactions. However, on one occasion, records were inconsistent, and the manager did not identify this. As a result, the concern was not fully explored.

There have been times when children have been held. These interventions are used appropriately and only as a last resort in line with individual children's care plans. Following any incidents, both children and staff are spoken to, with reflective practice used to inform and improve future responses. Since the last inspection, the number of incidents has decreased.

There has been a reduction of missing-from-home incidents. When children go missing from home, there is an effective and collaborative approach to ensure children return home safe.

Safer recruitment procedures are firmly in place and followed, ensuring that only suitably vetted individuals are employed to work in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Following the last inspection, the previous manager left. The deputy manager assumed the role and registered with Ofsted. She is an experienced and committed leader who is focused on empowering the staff team. She is developing practices to ensure children receive higher standards of care.

Children benefit from been cared for by a stable, qualified and experienced staff team. This has been particularly effective for two children, who have lived in the home for several years. Staff demonstrate a warm and playful approach to caring for children, fostering positive relationships and emotional security. Staff members say they feel well

supported by leaders and are encouraged to develop both in their roles and in their broader professional growth.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision from leaders and managers who are suitably trained. The introduction of personal development plans supports staff to reflect on their practice, identify areas for improvement and develop their skills. Staff attend training to support them to meet the individual needs of children who live in the home.

Leaders and managers have strengthened oversight and monitoring arrangements since the last inspection. These systems are now effective in identifying and addressing areas for development. Enhanced monitoring by senior leaders further strengthens oversight and scrutiny. All requirements from the previous inspection have now been met.

Communication with professionals is effective. There is strong partnership working and a shared commitment to promoting positive outcomes for children. However, the manager does not consistently ensure that staff can access children's current plans. In instances where placing authorities fail to take effective action, the manager has not escalated through the appropriate channels to ensure children's plans are prioritised and addressed without delay.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure safeguarding procedures are followed consistently and in a timely manner to ensure children's safety and well-being are prioritised, particularly when allegations are made. In addition, they must ensure that Ofsted and local designated officers are notified without delay.	30 November 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs. In particular, the registered person should ensure that escalation occurs when responses from external professionals are delayed, when care records are not obtained following reviews, or when there are delays in care planning for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)

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: SC453726

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aston Children's Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 147 Stamford Hill, London N16 5LG

Responsible individual: Kate Somerside

Registered manager: Manasapriya Manivannan

Inspector

Joanne Humphreys, Social Care Inspector

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