

SC462729

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited – The White Trees Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation and provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2025.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 June 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/04/2024	Full	Good
08/08/2023	Full	Good
18/05/2022	Full	Good
19/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved into the home, and three children have moved out. At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home. All children were seen during the inspection, and two of the children were spoken with.

The interactions between staff and children are warm and loving. One child said: 'I love it, I love the staff, it feels like home.' Children choose to spend most of their time with each other and staff. Children recognise the benefit of the support that they receive from staff. These positive relationships have helped provide children with a strong foundation to make good progress.

Staff understand how to communicate with children. They use a therapeutic model to guide their practice. Staff have a clear understanding of the model and adapt it to meet the needs of the children. This has helped children form trusting, respectful relationships with staff.

Staff work closely with external health agencies to ensure that the children's health needs are met. One child has several professionals overseeing their individual care needs. Staff continue to seek support to ensure these needs are consistently met through a multi-agency approach. Consequently, children's health has significantly improved.

Children's engagement with education is varied. For one child, there is good improvement in attendance and participation in lessons. For other children, staff have an understanding of the challenges relating to children's attendance. Staff work in close partnership with local and virtual school staff to overcome these. This approach helps children to build a positive experience of school.

Thoughtful planning helps children to build meaningful relationships with staff before they move into the home. However, despite this the staff were not able to meet the needs of one child who left the home in an unplanned way. A professional said: 'Staff tried everything they could to maintain [child's name] at the home.'

Staff support children to have new and meaningful experiences. Children enjoy regular activities that align with their interests. Children have travelled to Dublin to participate in a world championship sports event, and visited a football stadium and a spa hotel. Staff enjoy activities with children. Staff celebrate children's important events and invite local children to join in. These have helped children to build a sense of community and increased their confidence.

Staff capture children's experiences in high-quality memory books that highlight enjoyable times. These books are given to children when they leave so they can take these special memories with them.

Staff recognise the importance of supporting children to maintain and explore family relationships. One child's parent said: 'Staff are very supportive of family time, driving long distances without complaint.' Staff have helped one child connect with a family member the child had not met. Helping children build these connections strengthens their future family relationships.

Staff help children to explore their cultural backgrounds. Children have enjoyed experimenting with their hair and clothing style. Staff help children to cook and enjoy traditional meals. This helps children to build a positive sense of individual identity.

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

Leaders and managers take effective action to address safeguarding concerns when staff practice has fallen short of expectations. This includes carrying out investigations to identify wider learning. The lessons learned are shared with the staff team to improve their practice.

Staff have a clear understanding of children's vulnerabilities. Children's care is individualised to them and gives them age-appropriate freedom. Staff use creative responses to help children develop the skills to manage their personal safety. Children said that they feel safe and can talk to staff and managers about their worries.

There is a strong anti-bullying ethos at the home. If children are unkind to each other, staff take effective action to address concerns before they escalate. Staff are creative in the ways that they help children to improve their interactions with each other. Staff plan activities that help children to spend positive time together. These help children to learn how to manage relationships, which will benefit them as they move into adulthood.

Staff respond in line with agreed procedures when children have gone missing from home. When children have left the home without permission, staff respond quickly. Staff search for children and support them to return home and talk about their feelings. This approach has helped to reduce missing-from-home incidents.

There are occasions when staff use holds to keep children safe. There are systems in place to track these. The use of holds has decreased over time for all children. Staff and children are consistently spoken to about these incidents. Analytical reports capture what staff could have done differently instead of holding children. These help staff to learn from these interventions and help children in different ways.

Staff have used consequences with children as part of a wider approach to behaviour management. These are proportionate; however, children are not always consulted. This means children do not have the opportunity to understand the relevance of the consequence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and has a good understanding of the home. She and the deputy manager are committed to improving outcomes for children.

Managers have high aspirations for staff and children. Managers are highly motivational and take the time to celebrate children's achievements and build a positive culture.

Staff are positive about managers. Staff said that they have a very supportive and accessible management team. This is reflected in the overall staff morale.

The feedback from professionals and family members is positive. The manager was praised for her 'excellent' communication. Creating positive relationships with professionals and families helps to ensure children have consistent care.

Managers ensure staff have a good level of supervision support. Managers are visible at the home and spend time with staff and children. Staff benefit from formal supervision sessions that help them to reflect and develop their practice.

There is a range of training available to help staff understand children's needs and how to support them. Managers have sought specialist training to further upskill staff. Staff said that they feel confident to manage children's needs because of their additional training.

Staff review the impact of children moving into the home against those already living there. However, staff have not included a review of the children's needs and how they will be met by staff.

The manager demonstrates a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development. Although leaders and managers have responded appropriately to incidents, they have not always notified Ofsted in a timely manner. This limits Ofsted's ability to monitor incidents.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure they have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to Ofsted. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure they only accept placements for children after they have fully assessed and planned how they will meet children's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they consult with children when consequences are used. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)

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: SC462729

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SureCare Residential Limited – The White Trees Group

Registered provider address: The Old Snap Factory, Twyford Industrial Estate,
Twyford Road, Bishop's Stortford CM23 3LJ

Responsible individual: Emma Barr

Registered manager: Lucie Cameron

Inspector

Lexi Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024