

SC472139

Registered provider: Amegreen Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a private organisation and provides care for up to three children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 17 January 2023.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 July 2023

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: 27 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2022	Full	Good
21/07/2021	Full	Good
30/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
14/08/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make exceptional progress from their starting points. They are cared for by a skilled, kind and committed group of adults who know them extremely well. The adults support children to develop trusting relationships with them at their own pace.

Children feel safe because they benefit from predictable structures and routines. As a result, children's self-esteem noticeably improves when they come to live at the home. One child's independent reviewing officer, who has worked with the child for several years, told inspectors that the child is 'the most settled she has ever been. She has developed a confidence around adults, and this has enabled her to tell adults how she is feeling.' As a result of the child's remarkable progress, she has been able to return successfully to mainstream education. The child has a positive outlook and has developed aspirations for the future.

Children are supported to maintain positive relationships with the people who are important to them. One child's parent said that she feels 'very fortunate' that her child is living in this home. She spoke highly of the 'care and love' that the child receives from the adults and commented that this is extended to the whole family.

Children enjoy living in a clean, well-maintained and homely environment, with personalised living spaces. Their privacy is respected and they are supported to take ownership of their bedrooms, which contain personal items that reflect their interests and identity.

Children are thriving and have positive health outcomes as a result of the nurturing care that they receive. One child was admitted to the home from hospital and has made excellent progress in relation to both her physical health and her emotional well-being.

The organisation has built a well-equipped outdoor activity centre next door to the home. Here, children can learn new skills by participating in a range of educational and recreational activities supervised by a qualified instructor. Children also frequently visit an education centre which is attached to some stables. Children can access a therapeutic programme known as 'equine assisted learning'. One child in particular has excelled at horse riding and animal care. She spoke with pride and enthusiasm about her developing skills.

Children and adults have access to the organisation's therapists. Training programmes for adults in topics such as trauma and attachment enable them to ensure that all aspects of the care that children receive are therapeutic. As a result, children benefit from being cared for by knowledgeable, well-informed staff and learn how to build and to maintain positive relationships with them.

Children's independence is fully promoted, and a particular strength of the home is the adult's commitment to preparing children to live more independently in the future. Adults take every opportunity to help children to learn new skills, in a safe and planned way. Thorough records clearly demonstrate the excellent progress which children make. Examples include children being able to independently order and pay for meals in restaurants and developing the skills and confidence to regularly plan and cook nutritious meals for everyone living in the home.

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

Children's safety and well-being are priorities for staff. The stability of the staff team means that all staff members have an excellent awareness of each child's strengths and vulnerabilities. Children have thorough and detailed risk assessments which clearly describe how to keep them safe. Effective and open communication within the team and with other professionals further underpins the safeguarding culture and promotes children's safety.

Due to the positive relationships enjoyed between children and staff, the frequency of children's behavioural incidents has reduced over time and the use of physical intervention is rare. When restraints do occur, the registered manager carries out a thorough review with the children and adults involved.

Positive behaviour from children is promoted and rewarded. As a result, the use of consequences is kept to a minimum and effective restorative work is undertaken. This approach supports children to have a positive experience of learning how to make amends for their mistakes.

Incidents where children are at risk of harm, for example by going missing from care, have reduced over time. Children told inspectors that they feel safe and that they can speak to the staff if they are worried about anything.

Managers make sure that staff have a well-rounded awareness of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff who spoke to the inspectors confidently described the steps they would take if they had safeguarding concerns. Staff could name the external agencies they should approach if they had any concerns about children's safety and well-being.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is ambitious and advocates proactively on behalf of children. She is supported well by the deputy home manager and the responsible individual. Managers have created a culture which is nurturing and helps children to feel safe and cared for. They share a clear vision about how to achieve the best possible outcomes for children.

Adults work together as a cohesive team, due to the registered manager's dynamism and her effective direction and support. One adult described the managers as 'receptive and considerate'. Another said that, because adults feel valued and respected, they are inspired to provide high-quality care to children. As a result, children respond by working hard to meet the goals that are important to them.

Supervision is reflective and debriefs after incidents are child-focused. There are opportunities for adults to critique their own practice. Clinical group supervision is of clear benefit to the morale of the adult team and enhances their capacity to respond to children empathetically. The value of this group supervision is recognised by managers and adults, but it does not yet take place regularly.

Working closely with other professionals is given high priority by the registered manager. Feedback from external professionals was extremely positive regarding communication, partnership working and the support provided to children to help them to become increasingly safe.

The registered manager and adults are strong role models for the children and there is a culture of respect and acceptance. In one example, the family of a vulnerable neighbour thanked them for the kindness that the children have shown to their relative.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff supervision enables staff to reflect and act on how their own feelings and behaviour may be affected by the behaviour of the children they care for. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: SC472139

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Amegreen Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Courtyard, Sulhamstead Abbots, Sulhamstead
RG7 4EE

Responsible individual: Rachel Redgwell

Registered manager: Karen Hatch

Inspectors

Mike Simmonds, Social Care Inspector
Tash Williams, Social Care Inspector

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