

SC472164

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 five children with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD).

The manager registered with Ofsted on 3 February 2022.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 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: 29 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/06/2021	Full	Good
31/07/2019	Full	Good
16/05/2018	Full	Good
17/11/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff understand children's health needs. They work collaboratively with external health professionals to provide effective support to children with complex health conditions. Thorough assessments are carried out to help staff to provide children with safe and effective care. Children who have in the past been deprived of food, struggled with self-esteem, and experienced mental health issues are now enjoying eating healthy meals and are confident to engage with other children and staff. One child proudly reminisced, 'I was so small when I came here, but now I'm big.'

Professionals speak positively about the children's experiences and progress. A social worker said: 'Staff and their therapy team have helped him (child) make significant progress. He is able to talk to adults both at home and school without expressing his feelings through behaviours, and his relationship with parents is a pleasure to see.' Another child's social worker added, 'As a result of the progress he (child) has made in managing his feelings and emotions, we are now in the process of exploring his move to foster care.'

Children are encouraged to share their views, wishes and feelings. Staff use creative and relaxed approaches to engage in regular one-to-one discussions with children. Children reflect on how to engage with peers, develop self-care skills, and they are involved in decisions about changes to the home. This assures children that their views matter.

Children have fun attending a wide range of carefully planned creative activities. They attend local clubs, including swimming, taekwondo and football, where they enjoy meeting other children from the community and make new friends. Additionally, children participate in group activities, including visits to the trampoline park, the farm and eating out. They also have fun at home where they listen to music, sing, dance, and participate in arts and crafts. These occasions provide children with valuable memories.

Children are supported to develop independence skills which are suitable for their age and capabilities. They cook meals alongside staff, take responsibility for their own laundry, run their bath, and carry out their personal care routines. As a result, children develop essential skills that will help them in the future.

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

Staff understand children's individual risks. These risks are extensively detailed in assessments and are reviewed with involvement of other professional agencies, including local authorities, school and the police. This process ensures that effective measures are taken to keep children safe.

Most children do not go missing from the home. On occasions, children have tried to walk off or jump over the fence. However, staff have immediately brought them back home. Staff adhere to clear protocols which provide guidance on actions to take when children go missing, including working alongside other agencies to search for children and bring them home safely.

Any allegations relating to staff practice are responded to appropriately by the registered manager in consultation with the local authority designated officer. Internal investigation processes address any practice issues effectively. Effective assessments are implemented for children who are highly likely to make allegations. These are carried out with involvement of the registered manager, social workers, local authority partnership and the police. As a result, safer processes are followed when children make an allegation, and timely investigations are carried out.

Children know the rules and boundaries of the home. Staff use the PACE (Playfulness, Acceptance, Curiosity and Empathy) model of care and guidance from therapists to support children to calm and self-soothe when they struggle with their feelings and emotions. Staff use de-escalation techniques effectively, which has resulted in a decrease in incidents and the use of physical restraints. A social worker said, 'When restraints increased, meetings were held with the manager and effective measures were taken, resulting in a massive decrease in these.'

Staff are safely recruited. Leaders and managers ensure that all processes and measures are taken to obtain previous information records before employment is confirmed. However, on occasions, leaders and managers fail to ensure that identification copies indicate that original documents have been seen before recruitment is complete.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager demonstrates passion and commitment to the service. She has a well-established relationship with the children. Leaders and managers work collectively with the team to provide good care to the children.

Clear monitoring processes are used by leaders and managers to track and review children's progress. Three monthly children's progress reports are completed and shared with social workers and school placements indicating the progress made by the children.

Staff and managers receive regular and effective supervision. Staff also attend therapeutic meetings which focus on individual and group practice, children's progress, and areas of development. Staff appreciate the support and coaching they receive.

Most training has been completed. However, the registered manager has not completed supervision training, and some staff have not completed training that is in line with children's current needs.

Social workers share positive views about the home and the care provided to children. One social worker commented, 'The manager and staff have an ingredient that makes this home such a caring place that gives children security and love.'

The registered manager and staff promote equality and diversity effectively. Staff use creative, well-planned approaches to support children to discuss and understand differences in people. One child from a Caribbean background has been helped to obtain hair care products to help them to maintain their hair. A member of staff from an African background celebrated their culture with the children through cooking and sharing different dishes from his origin.

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 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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))	30 Sept 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that good employment practice is maintained, as set out in regulations 31 to 33. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. The provider must also ensure that interview processes explore the applicant's knowledge and evidence the quality of completed interviews. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph)

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: SC472164

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: Hayley Wiles

Inspector

Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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