

SC480705

Registered provider: Arc-HD Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children who experience social, emotional and/or mental health difficulties. The accommodation is set in three individual living areas, with a shared communal space.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 September 2025

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: 6 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/01/2025	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
28/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
15/02/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the last inspection, four children have moved on from the home, and two children have moved in.

Living in this home is a transformative experience for children, and they are supported in making exceptional progress from their starting points. Significant and highly effective support from staff helps children who may not otherwise have done so to achieve academic qualifications and employment. Families are unanimous in praise for the staff and their dedication to the children. Staff support children to acknowledge and celebrate their progress. One child wrote a letter to a child who was new to the home. The child wrote the letter to encourage the new child to give staff a chance to change their life like they had done for them.

Children's views are at the heart of staff's practice. Children share their views with confidence, in the knowledge that staff will act on their wishes. Children are encouraged to contribute to their plans and attend their statutory meetings, and they benefit from a strong multi-agency approach towards their care. Feedback from children has been used in training sessions with an organisation that employs advocates and independent people. This allows good practice to be shared with the professionals to help them to assess the quality of care for children.

When children move into the home, staff use creative ways to help them settle into their new environment. When one child was struggling to build relationships with staff, the child's family regularly visited the home for meals, so the child was able to see positive relationships between the staff and their family. This helped the child to be more accepting of staff.

Staff promote and encourage independence. When children are ready, they are encouraged to learn independent living skills. Staff further support independence with books they create that the children can take with them when they move on. Staff have compiled a cookbook for children containing basic recipes that they can learn before they leave and are then able to refer to the book as a prompt. Staff are currently compiling a wellness book with strategies to help children manage their emotions when they are living independently. This fosters children's confidence in their ability to live independently.

Children are encouraged to engage in their passions and hobbies and become part of the community. One child became a leader at their local scout group and baked cakes for a local dementia group. One child is passionate about the environment, and staff are assisting them in collecting items to make ecobricks. Children have raised money for charity and have been birdwatching for a bird protection society.

Staff work closely and sensitively with children's families. They develop a strong partnership to achieve shared goals for the children. Children's families are welcomed into the home. This helps children to maintain vital connections and supports parents and carers in building relationships with their child. One parent said that the child's experience of living in this home allowed them to be a family again.

Staff promote children's health and well-being effectively. Children are registered with a GP, dentist and optician, and they attend check-ups. Staff work in partnership with mental health services to help children access the right levels of support. For one child, the home's manager and the local authority have agreed to jointly fund a neurodiversity assessment for which, otherwise, the child would have had a very long wait.

Children live in a comfortable and inviting environment. Children have their own bedrooms, bathrooms and lounges, as well as a communal lounge. This means that children have the option to spend time with others or by themselves. The quality and depth of the facilities available results in enhanced independence opportunities for children, who can take on responsibility for their own areas of the home.

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

Staff understand children's needs and vulnerabilities and know how to help them achieve the best possible outcomes. The staff have access to a psychologist who delivers training to them around children's needs that they have not encountered before. Children contribute to their plans and guide staff as to how they wish to be supported. Staff are extremely supportive of children when they are upset and help them develop strategies to process their feelings. This work enables children to build their resilience.

Staff are responsive to children's behaviour and create well-considered safety plans that are effective in reducing risk. Safety plans are helpfully clear about how children will be supported. Staff work well with professionals from outside the home to identify, manage and reduce safeguarding concerns for children. Additional professionals are commissioned to work with children whenever necessary to reduce their risks.

Staff benefit from comprehensive inductions that help them prepare for their roles. There is a big emphasis on safeguarding as part of the induction. Staff receive safeguarding training and learn about the safeguarding procedures they will need to follow. This immediately embeds safeguarding knowledge into staff practice.

One child went missing from the home. However, when they were missing, staff diligently followed agreed plans to ensure their safe return home. Staff keep detailed records of the measures taken to contact and locate the child. Staff continued to look for the child after notifying the police that they were missing. They liaised with the local authority to ensure that the child had the opportunity to explore why they went missing and how staff could support them in the future to make it less likely that they would go missing again.

There has only been one physical intervention since the last inspection. The child and the staff involved were given the opportunity to reflect on the incident, discuss how they were feeling and identify any learning that could help prevent future incidents. Staff are adept at helping children express their emotions in more positive ways. This significantly contributes to the extremely low level of physical interventions.

Safer recruitment processes are robust. The home has one vacancy. However, the manager is committed to only employing suitable staff and has turned down candidates who have applied for roles when he did not feel they would fit with the staff team and the children. Initial screening calls are undertaken with candidates before an interview is offered. If candidates are successful at interview, they are then offered a shadow shift to assess their interaction with children and with the staff team before employment is offered. This provides an extra layer of scrutiny to ensure that only suitable individuals care for the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. He is a strong advocate for the children and a role model to his team. The manager is unwavering in his dedication to the children and the care they receive. He has robust monitoring systems in place that allow him to have sound oversight of the home.

The manager has plans to develop the service. The company has recently been taken over by a new organisation. The manager and staff worked to ensure that the takeover did not cause any disruption for the children. The manager is keen to work with the new organisation to further develop the service and the care that children receive. The manager has spent time with the new directors and is currently looking at strengthening training opportunities for the staff.

An extremely competent team of staff support the manager, enabling them to work independently in his absence. The manager has great confidence in his team and highly praises their care and dedication to the children. The manager balances his effective oversight with allowing the team to work with an appropriate degree of autonomy to develop their own skills and practice. This supports children receiving the best care from the staff team.

When a child had to move on from the home, the staff were committed to understanding why this had happened and what could be done differently in the future. A full reflection evidenced that the staff had not been made completely aware of the child's needs before they moved into the home. The staff were meticulous in their recording of the child's needs when they moved on, so the new home had as much relevant information as possible to prevent further moves for the child. The learning from this experience was also used well to enable the staff team to implement further strategies to better support other children to settle when they move in.

Professionals recognise the strong progress that children make in this home, even in a relatively short length of time. They highlight the very effective work of the staff team to

keep children safe. The staff work closely with professionals, and professionals listen to them. This is testament to the confidence professionals have in the staff. The manager is confident in challenging professionals when decisions are made that may not be in children's best interests.

The manager ensures that moves for children are sensitively planned, even when timescales are short. Family members are encouraged to be involved in children's transitions and the care that they subsequently receive. This helps children settle into their new home.

Staff speak highly of the manager and the support he provides to the team. Staff have confidence in the manager, and the manager has confidence in them. Staff describe him as 'patient', 'kind' and 'supportive'. Some staff supervision sessions have recently been missed due to unforeseen circumstances. However, staff are not concerned by this and say they can approach the manager at any time for advice, guidance and support.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should have systems in place to ensure that all staff receive supervision of their practice within the time frame specified by the provider. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC480705

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Arc-HD Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Wessex House, Upper Market Street, Eastleigh SO50 9FD

Responsible individual: Katherine Openshaw

Registered manager: Paul Collins-Painter

Inspector

Louise Webling, Social Care Inspector

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