

SC481172

Registered provider: Absolute Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is managed and run by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who may have social or emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home. All three children were spoken to.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 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: 1 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/10/2024	Full	Good
06/02/2024	Full	Good
18/01/2023	Full	Good
08/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children said that they like living at the home. Children benefit from a consistent team of staff who know them well. Staff actively listen and support children to understand their views. This means that children build trusting relationships with staff. Children are supported to develop a sense of belonging, and this contributes to their overall progress.

Children benefit from support delivered by staff who understand the home's model of care. Staff are encouraged and supported to develop their understanding through input from the therapy team and regular opportunities for reflection. This enhances the quality of care provided.

Children are encouraged to explore their interests and try new experiences through a range of activities and events. These include opportunities in the local community, helping children to build a sense of belonging and connection to the world around them.

Children have made progress in their education. One child, who had previously been out of education, was supported through structured activities and routines until a school placement was secured. Staff promote education with clear routines and expectations that reinforce the value of learning to support future opportunities. Children have aspirations for their future and believe they are achievable.

Children are supported to be in good health. Where needed, staff take the time to understand specific health needs and ensure that all children have access to health services. Emotional health is promoted alongside physical health. Children benefit from access to the in-house therapy team. This supports emotional well-being and helps children begin to address trauma in a safe and secure environment.

Moving in and out of the home are managed sensitively and in line with children's needs. Children are welcomed into the home with understanding, recognising that this can be a challenging time. When children move on from the home, staff ensure that they support positive endings. Children receive memory books to help them reflect on their time in the home. Where endings are more sudden, staff remain mindful of the emotional impact. Staff continue to offer support and connection, which helps children feel valued and cared for beyond their time in the home.

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

Children feel safe. Information is shared effectively, and staff collaborate closely with partner agencies to ensure a consistent and coordinated approach to keeping children safe. This collaborative practice helps to identify and respond to risks promptly and ensure that children's welfare is prioritised.

Children are rarely missing from home. When a child leaves the home, staff follow the child's plan to reduce risk and promote safety. Staff use their relationships with children to encourage safe choices and support their return home. When children do go missing from home, staff work closely with partner agencies to locate and return the child safely. This includes actively searching for children and maintaining communication with professionals to ensure a coordinated safeguarding response.

Allegations against staff are managed to protect children. Investigations are thorough, with clear processes in place that prioritise children's safety and emotional well-being. Support is provided to children throughout. Actions are taken promptly, and relevant agencies, including placing authorities, are involved at every stage to ensure a coordinated safeguarding response.

Risks associated with children are known and understood. Risk assessments identify key concerns and provide clear guidance for staff to follow. However, risk assessments are not always dynamic when reviewed. Changes in risk are not always captured, and this limits the ability to recognise progress or respond to emerging concerns.

Positive behaviour is promoted. Staff use praise and incentives to recognise and reinforce good choices. Physical interventions are rare and only used as a last resort, in line with individual behaviour management plans that include the child's voice. Children's behaviours are understood, and consequences are not extensive. However, there is limited evidence of a restorative approach that would support a level of learning.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a stable and experienced management team. The registered manager is qualified and knowledgeable. The home is appropriately staffed, with a consistent and committed team. Staff speak positively about the support they receive from managers, whom they respect and trust. Managers promote a culture of high expectations and aspirations for children.

The manager uses an effective monthly monitoring process to ensure standards are maintained. Feedback and learning are used to inform and develop practice. Children's views are also sought, including when children leave, to support future improvements. The manager has a clear understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development, and this supports ongoing improvement and reflective practice.

Staff are well supported through a robust training programme. Training is regularly reviewed and tailored to reflect the specific needs of the children and the home. This ensures that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to meet the children's needs. Staff feel valued and supported, and they are confident in applying their learning to practice. Staff are also encouraged to progress in their roles, which promotes a culture of continuous improvement and high-quality care.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision. Supervision provides an opportunity for staff to receive guidance and support and discuss children's safety and well-being. Reflection in supervision records is limited.

The manager completes a review of the premises regularly to ensure the home is safe. However, the document references alternative legislation, which limits its relevance. The review does not identify all potential risks, including those in the immediate neighbouring areas. Omissions indicate that leaders have not fully considered all environmental risks or developed plans to mitigate them effectively to ensure the home is safe.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them, ensuring that all risks are reviewed in documentation, so the risk assessment is reflective of the risk changes. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature and help children recognise the impact of their behaviour. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice that allows them to reflect on their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that under regulation 46, the registered person reviews the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 64, paragraph 15.1)

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: SC481172

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Absolute Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: 98 Grove Street, Leek ST13 8DU

Responsible individual: Derrell Crump

Registered manager: Tina Saynor

Inspector

Kate Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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