

SC486167

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for one child who may have needs associated with social and emotional difficulties. Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home and one has moved in.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2021.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 August 2024

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	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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: 19 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/04/2023	Full	Outstanding
21/06/2022	Full	Good
25/08/2021	Full	Good
30/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

This is a happy, welcoming home where children thrive because of the highly nurturing care they receive. Relationships between staff and the children are exceptionally strong. Children value their time with staff and benefit from the relationships they have together. As a result, children feel secure and settled here. The child who currently lives in the home said that they want to stay living here until they are an adult. The child who previously lived in the home still keeps in touch with staff.

The child has made significant progress in many areas of her life as a result of a high standard of care and support being provided by staff. The child now has a close and supportive relationship with some family members, and these relationships have improved significantly since the child moved into the home. Prior to moving into the home, the child was not engaging with education. They have now sat a number of GCSEs and are enrolled onto a college course. The child's engagement with school has consistently improved term on term since she has lived in the home.

Staff are committed to providing the child with fun and exciting experiences, including trips to amusement parks/farms, bowling and climbing. The child has enjoyed a holiday abroad and was able to travel by plane, as a result of growth in her confidence and continued support from staff. The success of this trip was due to staff's encouragement and willingness to adapt aspects of the trip to reduce the child's anxiety. Staff actively listen to the wishes of the child and tailor activities to her interests. They enthusiastically promote and nurture her interests and use this to source relevant educational opportunities.

Staff go above and beyond to ensure that children have good introductions into the home and are supported to develop meaningful relationships with staff prior to moving in. Introductions are carefully planned and carried out, with all members of staff visiting the child prior to them moving in, the child having several visits to the home, and regular telephone calls to the child to check in with them between their planned visits. The timing of transitions is adapted to ensure that the child's well-being is a priority, and this assists with the child forming close and trusting relationships from day one. When children move on from the home, there is careful planning and staff make considerable efforts to remain in contact and to continue to offer ongoing support after they have left.

The child in the home is celebrated. There are photographs of them and staff members enjoying activities throughout the home. Achievements are highly praised and important events are affectionally marked. Staff make efforts to celebrate a child's birthday even when they have recently moved on. Children's anniversaries within the home are also marked and celebrated, which will help them to feel loved and valued. Memories are preserved in memory books and a memory box, which contains sentimental items. The child also has a positive praise book, in which staff regularly write positive messages and fond memories of the child.

Relationships between the child and staff are warm, loving and nurturing. Staff clearly care deeply for the child, and this is evident in the way that she is kept as their absolute focus on a day-to-day basis. Family members and friends are welcomed into the home. Staff support the child to have friendships and encourage the child to bring these friends into the home for meals, and for activities. This means that the child feels that this is her home and that she is valued. The child feels loved and valued and says that she wishes to remain in the home forever, which is a credit to the staff and manager.

The house is well decorated and has a homely feel throughout. The kitchen area is the hub of the home, with staff, leaders and managers making this their base, which gives a family feel to the home. The child's views are sought over the decoration of her room, and they have various personal items on display.

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

Restraint has not been used in the home since the last inspection and there have been no missing-from-home episodes in the eight months prior to the inspection. Staff consistently encourage the child to reflect on her actions following significant incidents, which has contributed to an overall decrease in these incidents taking place. The low level of significant incidents in the home indicates that the child is settled in the home and that she has a sense of permanence and belonging.

In the period during the homes last inspection on 19 April 2023 and this inspection there have been two incidents when a child has been reported missing from home. When the child has been missing from home, staff have actively searched for her and maintained communication with her. Staff have communicated with relevant professionals and the child's own family to ensure that they were brought back to the home as soon as possible. The child was welcomed home and supported to have reflective conversations with staff following these incidents.

When the child has raised informal concerns about leaders and managers, she has been listened to and actions have been clearly explained to her. The child was supported to think about how she felt following feedback from leaders and managers, to ensure that she was satisfied with the response and understood why actions were taken.

Staff recognise when children are worried or anxious and take action to help them to feel safe. Incidents of self-harm and substance misuse are clearly recorded and clear chronologies allow for close monitoring. At times, the child has been supported to reflect on these behaviours, but this has not been consistent. Some of the child's risks are too easily accepted by staff, and there is a general lack of challenge to the child for using cannabis and vaping. External agencies are working with the child to provide specialist support to reduce risk taking behaviours. However, staff have not taken all the action that they reasonably could have to best understand the details of this support so it can be further promoted in the home as appropriate.

Care plans and safety plans are clear and set out the child's background, likes, dislikes and risks well. The child has been involved in creating some risk management plans, her active involvement in co-constructing these with staff has meant that she has understood the reasons for them increasingly well and this in turn has had a positive impact on her ability to manage her own behaviour better.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is considerably experienced and qualified, and there is an established team, which provides stability and consistency to children. The manager is committed to providing good-quality care and to leading a skilled, committed and effective staff team. Staff who work in the home say that they are supported well and that they are proud of the progress that they help children make.

The manager is a strong advocate for the child and has regularly, and very effectively, challenged other professionals to promote the child's best interests. Social care professionals report very positively on the quality of care provided at the home. There is strong partnership working with professionals from education and social care, and agencies recognise the positive relationships that they have with the manager. The manager has introduced some research-informed practice that has made a positive difference to the child and has contributed to her progress. There are further plans in place to explore and implement additional practice which is informed by a research evidence base.

Leaders and managers have good vision for the development of this home and high expectations for what children can achieve. Leaders and managers are aware of some staff vulnerabilities and are working with staff to address these.

Regular supervisions take place and there is frequent reflection on the ways in which staff are working with the child, and ways in which practice can be further improved. Team meetings take place in a timely manner, and these are also used as an avenue to strengthen areas of practice.

Staff at the home report that they receive training that helps them in meeting the child's needs and developing their own professional practice. Training is appropriately recorded and monitored to ensure that staff are up to date. However, leaders and managers do not always reassure themselves of staff's knowledge or their confidence putting new skills into practice. This means that vulnerabilities in staff skills are not always understood, and this may result in staff being unable to respond effectively in more complex situations.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff identify and monitor the risks that children present and seek to engage in work with the child in order to manage and reduce any risks. Additionally, the registered person should monitor work being completed by external agencies which is aimed at reducing a child's risks, to ensure that this is thorough and meeting the child's individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)
- The registered person should implement strategies to ensure that they are assured of staff practice in relation to risk and staff's understanding of training which they have engaged with. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

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: SC486167

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: South West Childcare Services

Registered provider address: Maybrook House, Third Floor, Queensway, Halesowen, West Midlands B63 4AH

Responsible individual: Guy Mammatt

Registered manager: Samantha Drew

Inspector

Min Sims, Social Care Inspector

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