

SC486479

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to five children. The statement of purpose states that the children cared for have complex needs, which may include autism spectrum disorders and complex associated difficulties. There were five children living in the home at the time of inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2021.

Inspection dates: 31 May and 1 June 2023

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: 8 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/06/2022	Full	Good
02/11/2021	Full	Good
04/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff know the children well and provide them with nurturing care. Staff understand the children's complex needs and help them to be more independent and make progress from their starting point.

Staff provide individualised care to children. Children's heritage and cultures are well understood and they receive care in line with their ethnicity. For example, when one child's personal care was causing them distress, staff were trained by an experienced professional to carry out the child's daily hair care routine. This is now a time that the child really enjoys. Staff promote children's gender, sexuality and identity. Children have recently been to a local Pride celebration.

Children's care plans are clearly recorded and staff understand the plans well. Staff understand the children's history and progress made since living in the home. Staff work flexibly to help children see their families and loved ones. Children understand their plans and have been involved in planning their move on from the home.

Staff know and use the specific communication needs of each child, such as pictures and symbols. This means that children are listened to and involved in decisions about the running of the home. Children can select their daily activities and contribute to menu planning. One social care professional shared that a child had made progress with their communication since living in the home. Children have regular access to an independent advocate to further promote their views.

Children have good school attendance. When one child was out of school for a short time, the manager successfully advocated for their quick return. This meant that the child was able to continue learning and maintain friendships.

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

Staff assess risks well and understand how to keep the children safe. Children are supported to take safe age-appropriate risks. For example, children who want to help with food preparation are supported to understand kitchen hazards and how to use utensils safely. There are high staffing levels to allow staff to respond to any emerging risks.

Staff understand that children use behaviour to communicate. Behaviour plans are clear and detail how staff should respond to children. Staff focus on meeting children's needs and keeping children engaged in activities, to prevent them becoming distressed. When physical intervention is used, this is as a last resort and only when there is a risk to safety,. The manager and senior staff use reflections with staff following physical interventions to inform future practice. This has meant that there has been a decrease in incidents.

Staff understand the risks to children online. There are well-developed safeguards in place. Staff help children to understand online risks. When staff were concerned a child was at risk, they took prompt action to keep the child safe, through one-to-one sessions and improved parental restrictions on devices.

Staff manage children's medications well. Staff undertake regular audits and record-keeping is good. Staff receive regular training in specific medical conditions such as epilepsy.

Sound monitoring surveillance is used in the upstairs hallway to monitor children during the night. The use of the equipment is outlined in a policy for the home. However, there are no consents from the local authority for its use and its use is not reviewed regularly. However, this has not had any effect on the children's sleep.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and suitably qualified. The manager has worked at the home for a long time and has developed good relationships with the children and staff. His commitment to improving the quality of care for the children is clear. This includes plans to further develop the home, and plans for each child to have a holiday in the coming year.

The manager and senior leaders have been persistent in escalating concerns to the local authority. The manager advocates for the children and challenges their local authority when needed. One child's parent spoke very positively about the importance of this, for her child and herself.

The manager and senior leaders work closely with professionals from education, health and social care. Professionals report effective communication and clear planning for the children's care. The manager takes on board feedback to further improve the quality of communication shared. Staff welcome professionals into the home and help develop relationships with children.

Staff are well supported. New staff feel welcomed and listened to. Staff receive a carefully planned induction and ongoing training. Regular supervisions help staff reflect on the children's needs and consider staff development. Staff are generally well trained to carry out their roles. However, staff have not had recent training in one child's condition to inform their practice, and this has led to some inconsistency in the care and support provided to the child.

The home is well equipped and is a safe environment. Some of the children's personal information was displayed outside their rooms. This was not needed and did not improve the child's care or support. The garden space is generous but was untidy, poorly maintained and not welcoming for the children.

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, The 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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1) (b)(d)) In particular, ensure that the use of surveillance is reviewed and only used to promote children's safety. Also, that the use of surveillance is agreed by each child's placing authority.	15 June 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff gain skills and experience that enable them to provide consistent support to meet each child's diagnosed needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- The registered person should ensure that, for the home to be a nurturing and supportive environment that meet the needs of the children, it is a homely, domestic environment. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene, etc). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC486479

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey
GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Paula Davis

Registered manager: Mark Goodenough

Inspectors

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector
Tony Waite, Social Care Inspector

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