

SC361167

Registered provider: Options Autism (5) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service provides a structured environment especially designed to meet the needs of children and young people who have autism spectrum conditions (ASC). The children and young people may also have additional medical and/or complex needs. This setting is an independent residential special school registered as a children's home. It is owned and operated by a private company. The service offers specialised education, care and accommodation for up to 22 children, including up to three children and young people under short-break arrangements. Some young people stay until they have completed their education at 19.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 June 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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14/11/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(d))</p>	13/08/2018
<p>The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(2)(c))</p>	13/08/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes all required information; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person") has spoken to the user about the measure, and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(i–viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	13/08/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in all areas of their development and their day-to-day experiences are positive. Staff provide a nurturing and caring environment. They use their verbal and non-verbal communication skills, including signs, symbols and pictures, to encourage children to express their views, wishes and thoughts. This helps children to grow in confidence and to build strong and healthy relationships with staff.

Managers and staff work in partnership with the education team and the clinical health team to provide children with bespoke care. Internal care plans reflect the aims and objectives of the placing authorities. This ensures that children receive integrated care. However, staff do not always complete the necessary one-to-one sessions with children to support and progress these plans. This potentially limits children's opportunities to develop their skills.

Children have easy access to on-site psychology and psychiatry services, speech and language specialists and general nursing practitioners. There is a seamless collaboration between these professionals. Staff prioritise children's physical and emotional health needs and ensure that they meet these needs.

Education is central to the culture and ethos of the home. Staff work alongside teaching staff and learning support staff to help children to achieve their full potential. Children enjoy education and their attendance is good.

Children take part in a wide and varied range of activities. Staff continually encourage children to try new things and to make the most of the home's extensive grounds and facilities. This helps children to develop new skills and interests, alongside their social interaction skills.

Staff work well with social workers, health and education specialists, and families, to effectively plan children's journeys into adulthood. Managers make sure that these plans reflect children's individual needs and complex behaviours. They consider the barriers that children may face, such as access to other facilities and resources. This approach increases the likelihood of children successfully moving on from the home.

Children benefit from regular contact with their families, and staff recognise how important this is. Families consistently praise staff for welcoming them into the home whenever they visit, and for helping them to make the most of the time they spend with their children.

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

The registered manager responds appropriately to safeguarding concerns and promptly refers these to external safeguarding agencies when required. The registered manager

keeps clear and detailed records of all safeguarding concerns. This ensures that managers, staff and other professionals take appropriate action to protect children from harm or abuse.

Staff ensure that children's risk assessments include all relevant information. These assessments consider each child's personal circumstances and the behavioural traits associated with their disabilities and the actions and behaviours of others, for example when children are especially sensitive to sounds or levels of noise. Staff review and revise these risk assessments after each incident. As a result, strategies in place to manage and reduce children's risks remain relevant.

Children regularly display challenging behaviours. These include self-harm and physical aggression. These behaviours are often symptomatic of children's diagnosed disabilities and reflective of their anxieties and frustrations. In these circumstances, staff use a range of tools, including distraction techniques and physical restraint, to manage these behaviours and keep children safe. There are some occasions when staff have failed to complete records of physical restraint in sufficient detail or include all necessary information. These records do not consistently demonstrate when managers review these events or discuss these incidents with children or staff. This limits the registered manager's ability to fully scrutinise these incidents.

All children received a minimum of one-to-one support. This reduces any potential for children to go missing from the home, although staff remain alert to this possibility. There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home since the last inspection.

Safe recruitment practice ensures that anyone employed in the home is safe to work with children.

There is some damage to the communal environment and to children's personal rooms and areas. Managers do not ensure that relevant staff or agencies complete necessary repairs and day-to-day maintenance without delay. This shortfall is potentially hazardous to children's health, safety and well-being.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to helping children to make good progress in all areas of their lives. The members of the senior leadership team are aspirational for children and champion a motivational 'can-do' culture in the home.

Staff benefit from good-quality supervision. Managers use these meetings to encourage staff to reflect on their practice and review their learning and development needs. Most staff hold relevant qualifications for their role or are working towards achieving these awards. Training programmes reflect children's individual needs. This means that children work with staff who have the skills, knowledge and qualifications to meet their needs.

Leaders and managers effectively monitor the service and the quality of care that children receive. The registered manager uses this information to establish patterns and trends across the service and to identify areas for improvement. As a result, the service continually evolves to meet children's needs and reflect the statement of purpose.

Partnership working arrangements between managers and external agencies, including the placing authorities, are exceptionally positive. The registered manager is clear in her expectations of others. When the actions of these agencies fall short of acceptable standards, she appropriately challenges these professionals. This ensures that children receive the services that they need to support their progress.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC361167

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Options Autism (5) Limited

Registered provider address: Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester,
Warwickshire B49 5JG

Responsible individual: Graham Norris

Registered manager: Rachael Sharpe

Inspectors

Jo Stephenson: lead social care inspector

Sarah Junor-Fitzpatrick: social care inspector

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