

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 specially 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.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 15 October 2013. She holds a level 4 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 October 2019

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: 27 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2018	Full	Good
14/11/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Good

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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(iv))</p> <p>This relates to the need for children's plans to reflect all elements of their care including education (where this is not provided on-site) and arrangements for visits with family members.</p>	20/12/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))</p>	20/12/2019

Recommendations

- A deprivation of liberty may occur where a child is both under continuous supervision and control and is not free to leave the home. A children's home cannot routinely deprive a child of their liberty without a court order, such as a section 25 order to place a child in a licensed secure children's home, or, in the case of young people aged over 16 who lack mental capacity, a deprivation of liberty may be authorised by the Court of Protection following an application under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.63)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and

understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good personalised care. Staff see the child first, and take pride in children's individual progress and achievements. This culture of positive regard supports children to develop and achieve their goals.

Managers support a culture of creativity in how children's needs are met. For example, managers arranged to have an individual kitchen built for one child to enable food preparation to be carried out separately to respect the child's religious beliefs. For another child, managers had a self-contained flat built. This attention to detail shows that children's individual needs are understood and met.

Children experience well-planned moves into and out of the home. Most children move on to adult services and staff work closely with colleagues in adult services over many months to ensure that children are well prepared for these critical changes.

Staff are supported by on-site health and education staff. This multi-disciplinary approach ensures that all elements of children's care is integrated. However, when children do not attend the school that is linked to the home, staff are less clear about children's educational progress. This has the potential to disadvantage a child's educational opportunities.

Children are supported to stay in touch with people who are important to them. Staff ensure that visits are a positive experience for everyone. This sensitive planning allows children and their families to build positive memories. However, when these plans are the subject of a legal arrangement this is not always clearly recorded. This means that staff do not always have access to the essential information they need to ensure that these visits are in line with the child's care plan.

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

Staff ensure that risk assessments and plans to support children's positive behaviour are thorough and are regularly updated. This means that staff are able to respond to new and emerging risks for children.

Children regularly display challenging behaviours. These are reflective of their disabilities. Staff work hard to distract children in these situations. Physical intervention is used as a last resort. There are occasions when children's records do not give the reader a clear understanding of an incident. This impacts on the staff's ability to learn from these situations.

Children are supported by a high ratio of staff. As a result, there have been no incidents of children going missing from the home since the last inspection. However, when a local authority fails to consider the legal status under which the staff act to protect a child over the age of 16 years, there is not sufficient evidence that managers have escalated this. As a result, staff may be at risk of restricting a child's liberty.

Staff ensure that children live in a well-maintained environment that is personalised to reflects children's individual interests and personalities. Good oversight of health and safety matters helps to ensure that children live in a safe home.

The registered manager ensures that safe recruitment procedures are followed. This promotes the safety of children by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a strong leader who knows the staff and children extremely well. She leads a stable and consistent management team. Managers are committed to helping children to achieve their individual potential.

Staff receive a good range of training to help them understand the specialist needs of the children who live in the home. However, when agency staff are employed at the home it is not clear that they have the same level of skills and knowledge as permanent staff members. This impacts the consistency of care that some children experience.

Staff are well supported with a clear system of induction, supervision and annual review of performance which includes an element of critical challenge. This provides staff with regular opportunities to reflect on and develop practice.

There have been four complaints since the last inspection. These have been resolved swiftly. This swift response helps to maintain the trust of families and professionals.

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

Tracey Cogan Greig, social care inspector
Alison Smale, Her Majesty's inspector
Karol Keenan, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019