

SC431799

Registered provider: SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

The home may accommodate up to four children. It is operated by a private company which has other similar homes in the area. The company specialises in providing care and therapeutic intervention for boys.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2019.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 April 2021

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	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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 who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 14 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

This highly effective service positively impacts on the children's lives. Their emotional and psychological well-being are central to staff practice. The four children living here receive an excellent standard of care and highly personalised support from a committed and caring staff team. The totality of their experience in the home, school and community is carefully considered. Consequently, children make excellent progress through the therapeutic relationships and the 'normalisation' of life. Children's progress is particularly noteworthy in respect of their previous life experiences and starting points when they first moved into the home.

Children benefit from the warm and trusting relationships that the staff form with them. They can talk to staff about their worries and concerns, confident that the staff will take these seriously and help them. One child described the staff's support as the best thing about the home. Another child complimented the staff's understanding of how he needed to be supported during the pandemic through his interest in football and music.

Senior leaders have been successful in creating a safe emotional space where the children can talk freely about the dynamics in the home. This practice has helped the children to demonstrate maturity beyond their years. They consider the impact of their own behaviour and modify it to improve relationships, so that everyone lives in a calm, safe environment. Excellent staff role modelling encourages the children to reciprocate the dignity and respect that are afforded to them.

The integrated therapeutic support that is embedded throughout the organisation offers the children every chance of success. Staff are committed to the long-term objectives of each child, understanding that there may be 'blips' on the journey. Children settle well. One parent commented that she has not seen her son so settled before.

The children's commitment to learning is impressive. All children attend school or college full time and they enjoy the experience. The role of a senior college support worker enriches the children's experience in their education and maximises their chance of success. This role is fully integrated with the care and therapy teams, so that everyone understands the current needs of the children and adopt the same strategies.

The staff's highly individualised support and keeping the children at the centre of their practice generates a culture of respect and security. Children view the service as their own home. The staff's inclusion of, and support for, the children's wider families, through the offer of family therapy for example, is noteworthy. Astonishing levels of success include the reintroduction of the children to their wider family

members, where relationships have been strained in the past. This focus on the rebuilding and strengthening of the children's family networks enriches their life experiences and sees their confidence soar.

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

Comprehensive safeguarding procedures are well understood and implemented by the staff. Safeguarding is at the forefront of their practice. Highly effective planning means that the children are kept as safe as possible as they build the confidence to engage with others in society.

Children say that they feel safe and secure. They develop helpful and socially appropriate coping mechanisms to deal with difficult emotions. In response to a potentially challenging situation, the staff encourage, educate and nurture. Physical intervention is not used.

All staff ensure that there is a detailed and comprehensive approach to any significant incidents. They keep the children as safe as possible during an incident. A debrief and an evaluation take place to consider how to prevent recurrence. This includes critical reflection of practice and a review of risk assessments. Staff give deep thought to the underlying psychological reasons for the children's behaviours. Consequently, strategies are successful and repeat incidents are unknown.

Staff keep the children as safe as possible in the cyber world. They identify and manage any possibility of risk and harm. The staff are not risk averse. They work exceptionally well with others, such as the police protection officer, to determine if the children are vulnerable to exploitation and potentially at risk of committing an offence themselves.

There are no instances of children going missing. However, there is a protocol in place and a strong relationship with the police should such an event occur.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager demonstrates exceptional leadership. She is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has clear development plans for improvement. Staff hold her in the highest regard, describing her as 'a terrific role model and a visible presence in the home'. She has listened to staff suggestions for improvement. For example, she has now deployed an additional staff member as a 'floater' on each shift to provide additional support.

Staff follow the therapeutic programme as outlined in the statement of purpose. This empowers the children to take responsibility for understanding their behaviours and developing their independence. Children are able to reduce their supervision levels as they engage with the programme.

Leadership and management practices across the organisation are exceptional. Senior leaders have high expectations of themselves and of the staff. They lead by example to sustain the highest possible quality of care. The responsible individual works occasional shifts at the home and is an excellent role model who boosts staff morale. Staff speak in the most positive terms of the wider organisation. One staff member said, 'I cannot talk highly enough of this company.'

Senior leaders are acutely aware of the potential impact on the staff by working in an intense and complex service. Staff have access to the organisation's own therapy team should they need additional support outside of the normal supervision process. Staff are settled in their own emotions. Morale is high. The support of direct line managers as well as senior leaders within the organisation means that the children are cared for by a well-balanced staff team. This means that children's life chances are maximised as a competent staff team continually seeks to listen and respond to their needs daily in a therapeutic environment.

The registered manager, with other senior leaders, carefully considers the whole dynamics of the home and the impact on the children currently living there. They agree strategies to maintain the positive environment so that the children can continue to make excellent progress. The senior leadership team has demonstrated excellent leadership, for example by making bold decisions when two young people moved on to adult placements. The team assessed the likely dynamics of the home because of this move and decided to accommodate the young people in other homes within the same organisation. This demonstrates their meticulous attention to the young people's welfare and their desire to continually promote positive outcomes.

Staff work well with other professionals. For example, key staff have produced a comprehensive plan with recommendations for the support that a child will need as he approaches adulthood. The registered manager is working with the placing social worker to review the pathway plan. Staff also work well with the organisation's own specialists. For example, they have developed key-work sessions with the education and therapy professionals, to ensure a consistent approach.

Some minor shortfalls in management practice were found. In one case, the registered manager did not check that a full employment history had been obtained when a member of staff transferred internally from another home within the same organisation. In another case, she did not ensure that all staff understood the detail in one risk assessment.

This is a home that is characterised by an exceptional leadership team within the home and the wider organisation. Senior leaders have clear visionary strategic direction for the future of the organisation to ensure that they remain at the forefront of practice.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice, as set out in regulations 31 to 33. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', par. agraph 13.1, page 61)

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: SC431799

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited

Registered provider address: 591 London Road, Sutton, Surrey SM3 9AG

Responsible individual: Gerard Berry

Registered manager: Chloe Valentine

Inspectors

Keith Riley, Lead Social Care Inspector
Rebecca Fisher, Social Care Inspector

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