

# SC481040

Registered provider: SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides residential care for up to four children and young people. 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 male young people who have a history of sexually harmful behaviours.

The manager has been registered since 24 February 2015.

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.

### Inspection dates: 10 and 11 August 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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:** 3 February 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2020	Full	Good
31/01/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/09/2018	Full	Good
18/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

The young people thrive in this home and enjoy the safety and nurturing environment. They make exceptional progress and take advantage of the opportunities presented to them. Young people are appreciative of the high levels of support and the chance to be able to reflect on their previous behaviours and learn how to address them.

Educational attendance is embedded and accepted as part of the routine of living in the home. This high level of expectation means that young people attend school regularly. As a result, the young people make very good progress, especially when considering their starting points. Most of the young people have been unable to attend school full time due to concerns about their past behaviours in their communities. Consequently, most have a disrupted educational history with poor attendance and achievement. The staff ensure that the young people all now benefit from full-time education at the school which is run by the organisation. As a result, many are working towards achieving their GCSEs, and one young person has recently achieved their bronze Duke of Edinburgh award. This has helped them to develop their self-esteem and confidence and improved their life chances.

Young people are encouraged, where it is appropriate and safe to do so, to develop their independence. Free time, with the opportunity to test the young people's independence and self-management skills, is gradually increased in line with their ability to cope with this transition and extra responsibility. This process is monitored closely, and decisions taken involve all relevant persons, including social workers, therapists, members of staff and, crucially, the young people themselves. This ensures that there is cohesive planning and a strong sense of collaboration to improve on positive outcomes for the young people.

Young people benefit from an open culture. There is a shared group experience in which behaviours are openly discussed. This helps the young people to develop insight into how they are behaving and what strategies can be developed to help them to progress. The young people are unanimous about how this process has helped them to develop their awareness and become more responsible.

Members of staff strive to ensure that the young people enjoy varied and enriching activities. Despite some of the restrictions young people experience due to risk assessment, the staff ensure that young people's leisure time is constructive and enjoyable. As a result, the young people can socialise and not become isolated, despite some of the restrictions that are in place.

Open communication between young people and adults ensures that the young people's views are valued and encouraged. They have numerous adults who they can voice concerns to if they do not wish to use the group meetings. The young

people feel that they have a meaningful role to play in the running of the home and in helping each other to make progress in their lives.

All the young people receive the healthcare they need. Members of staff ensure that young people attend routine appointments and support them in learning to look after themselves and live healthy lifestyles. Their emotional and psychological well-being is promoted to an excellent standard. Regular sessions with psychologists and therapists enable them to reflect on their past. In turn, they learn from this experience to implement strategies with a view to integrating safely into their wider communities.

The staff work collaboratively and sensitively with families to help the young people reunify with their siblings and other family members safely and in a planned way. This approach helps the young people to preserve a sense of belonging as part of a family. A professional said, 'The staff have been key in the reunification work for [name of young person] and the family.'

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

Staff hold the safety of the young people at the heart of their practice. There is an acute awareness of the vulnerabilities of the young people, and practice focuses on ensuring that everyone is safe. Consequently, there is a very settled atmosphere in the home, and the young people speak of feeling safe and respected. All the young people have members of staff, including therapists, who they can discuss any issues or concerns with.

Conflict management techniques are very well implemented. A strength of the home is the emphasis on group living and the importance of community meetings. They are a well-used opportunity for the young people to discuss their feelings and to voice their concerns about any dynamics and niggles. This approach ensures that there is constant reflection and provides a forum where differences can be safely voiced and explored.

The young people say that they feel safe and listened to. They are all aware of who they can approach if they have concerns or complaints and say that they appreciate the guidance and advice they receive from the staff. The open culture of the home encourages the young people and adults to discuss behaviours openly. This encourages honesty and an ability to reflect on how young people's actions can affect their small community.

Support from members of staff and therapists helps the young people to understand their backgrounds and traumas, vulnerabilities and risk-taking behaviours. Consequently, they develop a greater understanding of themselves, which helps them to recognise their emotions and learn new strategies. The young people are very clear that living at this home has helped them to develop insight and understand their responsibilities.

The staff team has developed very comprehensive missing-from-care protocols and risk assessments that contain all necessary information. The staff follow these procedures meticulously when the young people go missing from care, and they actively encourage the young people to return to the home at every opportunity. The home has excellent links with the local police community support officers. This is due to the registered manager persistently working with outside agencies to protect the young people.

The staff supervise all the young people's internet access in the home. The young people can progress towards owning a smartphone through their independence programmes. All the staff and young people have received internet safety training and are clear on internet restrictions in the home. The staff understand their responsibilities in regularly checking internet search histories and in helping the young people to understand the risks online.

Physical interventions are rare. The staff use praise and diversion techniques as alternative methods. The young people each have an emotional behaviour response plan that the registered manager reviews, and amends when necessary, to meet the evolving needs of the young people. The staff encourage the young people to reflect on their behaviours and, where appropriate, the young people are involved in the consequences and taking responsibility for their behaviours. For example, one child chose their own sanction after leaving the home without staff.

Staff training focuses on keeping the young people safe in the context of relevant risks. The completion of mandatory safeguarding training, as part of the induction process, ensures that staff understand and follow robust safeguarding procedures. The staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and who they are to report to if a concern arises. Most of the staff have completed their required level 3 qualification or have the equivalent. This promotes staff's understanding of the young people's behaviours and the challenges of supporting them.

The staff complete regular checks of the premises. Most health and safety checks are completed diligently and are recorded well by the staff. However, on occasion, fire tests have not been recorded weekly. This does not directly impact on the quality of care provided to the young people, but it does pose unnecessary and avoidable risks for the young people and the staff.

The overall safer recruitment process for newly recruited staff is generally very strong. However, inspectors found areas which do not meet regulation. A significant gap in employment history for one member of staff was identified, and past employment verification has not always been followed up by the registered manager. These omissions have not directly impacted on the quality of care provided to the young people, but opportunities have been missed to ensure that all staff records mirror effective recruitment practices.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager demonstrates a strong sense of ambition and has high expectations of her staff and the young people. As a result, the staff and the young people feel that they are valued and that there is a strong shared community ethos of helping each other. The young people speak highly of the registered manager, and value her care and guidance.

The registered manager is hands-on, highly visible and has a dynamic vision for excellence. To provide excellent services, she leads by example and demonstrates an unquestionable commitment and passion to providing the highest possible standards of care for the young people.

The setting's development plan and comprehensive internal and external monitoring systems focus on improving progress for the young people with subsequent excellent outcomes. The registered manager promotes a culture of high positivity and transparency. As a result, there is a clear emphasis on the importance of development and learning from events. This is a continually evolving service with a culture for continuous improvement.

The registered manager and responsible individual have a shared vision for the home. They are focused on providing a secure and stable base for the young people to enable them to progress and achieve. They work in close partnership with a range of professionals and specialist services to safeguard the young people and to meet their holistic and therapeutic needs. This approach demonstrates the leaders' and managers' dedication to wanting the absolute best care and outcomes for the young people.

## 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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that all gaps in staff's employment history are scrutinised and all matters relating to Schedule 2 are available in one place.</p>	12 November 2021

## **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that relevant health and safety legislation is complied with. In particular, the registered person should ensure that fire alarm tests are carried out weekly and that individual fire risk assessments are easily accessible. ('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:** SC481040

**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:** Callie Welch

## Inspectors

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

Máire Atherton, Her Majesty's Inspector, Social Care

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