

1259184

Registered provider: Ashwood Children's Care Home Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It provides care for up to four children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

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: 1 to 2 September 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 **good**

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: 30 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/12/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/08/2019	Full	Outstanding
12/12/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
31/07/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children receive exceptional standards of care from a highly competent team that knows them extremely well. There is a strong sense of emotional warmth and understanding towards children from staff. This enables children to build trusting relationships with staff and develop strong bonds that help them make exceptionally good progress. Children are nurtured, cherished and valued for who they are.

The manager and staff do not compromise on the standard of children's education. Children are transported to school and supported in the classroom to ensure continuity of education. The manager ensures that children have a choice in the school they attend. For one child, this involved a successful appeal to secure a place at a school of their choice. Children are flourishing due to their school achievements. They are enjoying new experiences such as residential trips. This is outstanding progress for children considering the previous disruption to their educational experiences.

The manager and staff show a high level of commitment to providing positive endings when children leave the home. They support children to move to new homes and work extensively to involve the key professionals. Children keep in touch when they have left. One previous resident has recently celebrated her birthday with the staff and children. She remains in regular contact with them. This has created an 'extended family' for her, helping her feel valued.

Children receive excellent support, from staff, with their health needs. Where a child has an ongoing condition, they are helped to understand what this means. One child has complex health needs. The staff are confident in their knowledge of the condition and procedures required to keep the child well. The manager and staff ensure, where appropriate, the child can administer his own medicines. This has increased the child's ability to manage his own health needs in a safe manner.

Children take part in regular activities, including sports, holidays and special events. They are supported to spend time with family and friends. Children are consulted in relation to contact with family to ensure they are happy with arrangements. The manager and staff have created evocative memory books. This means children can revisit the valuable times they have spent with those close to them. As a result, children will have good and lasting memories.

The manager and staff have commendable relationships with external agencies. Professionals describe the home as 'brilliant'. Communication and information-sharing with involved professionals and agencies are very good. Regular meetings take place and all agencies working with children are very well-coordinated. This means children receive the help and support they need to progress.

The manager and staff remain focused on making certain that children progress and have very good experiences while living in this home. Care and support to children is of an outstanding quality. Children are happy, content and making such good progress.

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

Staff understand the risks and vulnerabilities of children well. Risk assessments are detailed and include all pertinent issues and concerns for children. They are updated and reviewed regularly, particularly following an incident. The manager has initiated a system to analyse incidents more formally, to identify patterns or the underlying causes of difficult behaviour. This is helping to gain a more in-depth understanding of children's behaviours.

Children have trusted adults they can turn to. In addition to the staff team, there is a qualified therapist who has weekly individual meetings with the children. She has supported children to talk about their experiences. This valuable therapeutic support has helped children to disclose previous trauma. This is enabling children to make sense of their lives and make progress.

Staff follow missing-from-care procedures when children go missing from the home. They understand and act on any concerns relating to child exploitation or other forms of abuse. Staff work closely with involved agencies, identifying actions that increase the safety of children.

Children have good rules, boundaries and expectations of their behaviour. Children understand why staff implement boundaries and they accept these. Where children are becoming more independent, staff support them to take well-managed, age-appropriate decisions. This includes spending time away from the home without supervision. This approach reflects the commitment of staff in preparing children for the future.

The manager and staff are clear about their role in safeguarding children. Safe recruitment processes ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults. There are good links with the designated officer in the local authority and other relevant agencies. The manager and leaders have not always notified Ofsted in a timely manner following a serious incident. They have quickly acted to address this matter.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers have been effective in ensuring exceptional care for children. There is currently a newly appointed manager in post. She is not yet registered with Ofsted. There is a robust transition plan in place to support the new manager, maintaining stability for the children. Leaders and managers understand that she will need time to adjust to the role. Leaders are focused on ensuring the quality of care for children is maintained during this management transition.

Managers have very good knowledge of the children's experiences and the impact of trauma. This, together with their professional skills and experience, has established a strong foundation from which the staff team provides a high standard of care.

The staff enjoy a supportive and homely environment. They have continual professional development, including bespoke training provided by the in-house therapist. As a result, the care provided to children is grounded in theory and contemporary research.

Staff benefit from good-quality, professional supervision. Additionally, staff receive direct support from the therapist regarding their care practice. Staff feel valued, listened to and receive very good guidance and direction in their care practice. Consequently, the staff maintain confidence and resilience in their work.

Children are fully included in the care and support they receive. Staff and managers regularly seek the children's views, wishes and feelings. Managers encourage children to read and comment on their records. They act on what children say, if possible. Children's lives have been improved considerably due to the support they receive.

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

- The registered person should notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40 (4) (a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious.
Examples of incidents that are likely to be considered serious affecting the welfare of a child include: a child being the victim or perpetrator of a serious assault; a serious illness or accident; a serious incident of self-harm, or serious concerns over a child's missing behaviour, particularly where the child is considered to be at grave risk due to age or vulnerability or where they have been missing for a considerable period of time and their whereabouts is unknown. This is not an exhaustive list and homes must assess each case individually taking into account any patterns of behaviour or unusual behaviour which may indicate an increased risk to the child. Homes should also consider the frequency of incidents and judge whether their cumulative effect makes notification even if in isolation each event would not warrant this. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraphs 14.10 and 14.11)

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: 1259184

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ashwood Children's Care Home Ltd

Registered provider address: Ashwood Children's Care Home Ltd, 43a Repton House, Bretby Business Park, Ashby Road, Burton-On-Trent DE15 0YZ

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Nixon

Registered manager: Nathan Sweet

Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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