

# 1241785

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run by an education specialist service provider. It is registered to care for up to nine children with autism spectrum disorder and associated difficulties. The home is located within the provider's school campus, where the children currently living at the home also attend the school.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 April 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 21 April 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/04/2021	Full	Good
22/01/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/07/2019	Full	Good
19/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Children enjoy living in the home and they make progress; in some cases, this progress is exceptional. However, progress is not consistently strong for all children, and ineffective recording in plans means that the extent of this progress is not always captured.

Staff sensitively support children with complex needs and have developed warm relationships with them. Children can play and maintain their routines, but due to inconsistent staffing levels opportunities for children to broaden their experiences in the community are limited.

One parent spoke positively about their child's experience of the home. The child had improved their ability to walk independently, had accessed a more varied diet and had improved their skills in personal care. The parent explained, 'This has given [child's name] confidence, they're less anxious about things. I can't sing staff praises enough.'

However, children's progress at the home is not mirrored educationally. Staff shortages in the provider's attached school have led to inconsistent education attendance. Gaps in communication between school and home staff have resulted in children's routines being disrupted at short notice. This has led to additional pressures being placed on staff at the home to complete daily tasks. In one instance, this increased pressure led to an avoidable behavioural incident for a child.

Staff have created an environment in which children are able to explore who they are, including their gender identity, free from discrimination. The sensitive support of staff enables children to feel valued and cared for.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

At the last inspection, the physical condition of the home was of concern. While some improvements have been made in painting the building, other areas still require attention. Children's showers continue to be poorly maintained, with evidence of mould and mildew, and fridges and cookers are dirty and require cleaning. These concerns were raised in a health and safety review and have yet to be rectified, leaving children vulnerable to illness.

Furthermore, staff training in the safe handling of food is has not been updated, meaning that a large number of staff are not compliant with the provider's requirements. Senior leaders acknowledged this and agreed to address this matter urgently.

Staff do not always have clear guidance on how to manage known behaviours, particularly when children are out in the community. Staff use their relationships with the children to inform responses, but plans lack consistency. This had led to some staff avoiding taking a child to a community resource where known triggers for behaviour exist. As a result, the child cannot further develop their socially aware behaviour or enjoy the full experience of opportunities outside of the home.

Managers have not reviewed the fire risk assessment in line with the organisation and external auditors' recommendations. While this has not impacted on children's safety, it has led to a serious gap in oversight of the safety of the building.

Safer recruitment practice is consistently applied when employing new staff. This helps to ensure that children are protected from being cared for by unsuitable people.

In most cases, safeguarding concerns are recognised quickly and appropriate action is taken. However, on one occasion, leaders failed to report a concern to the relevant agencies regarding the use of a non-approved hold, despite being advised to do so by the independent visitor. The report of the incident had not been overseen by the registered manager; this demonstrated a slow response by leaders to ensure that the child did not come to harm.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

Due to inconsistencies in staffing and absences of senior members of the management team, monitoring in the home has been insufficient. This has led to delays in the reporting of concerns and the updating of children's plans, a decline in the maintenance of the home and reduced opportunities for children to access the community. This has limited children's experiences and slowed their progress.

Managers show an understanding of children's backgrounds and needs and the progress that they have made. Managers ensure that children are able to make progress in some areas of their agreed plans. However, it is not always clear what this progress is, as children's plans, such as therapeutic plans, have not been updated. This has led to inconsistency in staff knowledge of children's progress.

Staff have regular supervision. However, staff do not always have access to their records due to the supervisor not making them available. Similarly, team meeting records are not always available for staff to read, leading to inconsistencies and a missed opportunity for staff to have access to vital information.

Leaders have some understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The independent visitor was keen to inform inspectors of the positive approach that leaders have taken to making improvements. However, some areas of the home remain poorly maintained, despite being identified in external health and safety

plans. There is a clear development plan for the coming year that identifies actions to improve the service.

## 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 (2)(d))</p>	25 May 2022
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))</p>	25 May 2022
<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(d))</p>	25 May 2022
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p>	25 May 2022

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement. (Regulation 8 (2)(vi))</p>	
<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 staff—</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii))</p>	25 May 2022
<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(e))</p>	25 May 2022
<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	25 May 2022

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(h))	
<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 staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi))</p>	25 May 2022
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction;</p> <p>ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation; and</p> <p>provide each employee with a job description outlining the employee’s responsibilities.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	25 May 2022

## 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:** 1241785

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Aspris Children's Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** The Forge, Church Street West, Woking, Surrey  
GU21 6HT

**Responsible individual:** Hannah Cox

**Registered manager:** Lorraine Sadler

## Inspectors

Matt Nicholls, Social Care Inspector (lead)  
Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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