

# SC431799

Registered provider: SWAAY Child & Adolescent Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children with social and/or emotional difficulties. The home provides care for children of the same sex.

The register manager post has been vacant since July 2021.

### Inspection dates: 3 and 4 August 2022

**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 April 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
27/04/2021	Full	Outstanding
14/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2017	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

The provider has faced some recruitment challenges in the last few months. Despite these challenges, staff have worked tirelessly to try and maintain consistency and reliability of support for children. As a result, children have made good progress socially, emotionally, educationally and in developing their independence.

Children speak highly of staff. They say that their views are always at the centre of decisions. One child said that the organisation had helped him to find his voice and, as a result, he has been able to take more control of decisions that affect his life. Another child is preparing to chair their own upcoming looked after child review.

Parents, staff and children say that the quality of relationships is one of the key strengths of the home. One parent commented on the excellent support her child has received and how this support has extended to the whole family.

Children live very busy lives, engaging in full-time education and a wide range of community-based sports and leisure activities. Children commented that the pressure on staffing has had an impact on their ability to have any one-to-one time with staff at weekends and being able to engage in spontaneous activities.

Children benefit from strong partnership working between school, the therapy team and staff. This was particularly apparent in the 'Independence Steps' programme, which enables children to work towards gaining greater autonomy by meeting targets that are shared by all the professionals in their support network.

One child spoke passionately about his progress and journey towards semi-independence. He is in the final stages of his move from the home and expressed huge gratitude for everything the team has done to give him the confidence he needs to take these important next steps.

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

Staff provide support to children whose life experiences have exposed them to significant risk. Staff have a clear understanding of the risks that children face personally and in the community. Staff work closely with external community groups to ensure that children can continue to have an enriched experience.

When children require supervision in the community, staff ensure that this support is in place, but only for as long as necessary. This enables children to engage with friends in the community in a safe way.

Missing-from-care episodes are managed well. Staff demonstrate a pragmatic approach when working with children approaching adulthood. This has enabled

them to create age-appropriate protocols which minimise overuse of police resources while also ensuring that children remain safe.

On the whole, staff manage allegations appropriately. However, in one case, when a child was prone to making frequent allegations which they then subsequently withdrew, the organisational protocol has not been adhered to. This has led to variations in the reporting process. In one case, an allegation was not correctly notified to the regulator in a timely manner.

Staff manage the behaviour of children effectively, which promotes a calm and peaceful environment. Children say that consequences are fair and appropriate. Children are encouraged towards positive behaviour through incentives and regular praise from the team.

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

The current interim manager demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has identified daily administration as one area that has been negatively impacted by the pressure on staff resources. The quality assurance manager and interim manager have worked in close partnership to address shortfalls and have a detailed action plan to improve this area of practice. The manager has been able to demonstrate this plan is starting to have a positive impact and is helping to bring the quality of record-keeping in line with the organisation's expectations.

External visits from an independent person are regular but do not always capture the views of all the children or staff who live and work in the home.

The interim manager is a passionate advocate for the children in her care. She has a clear and ambitious vision for the home which she models effectively to her team.

Staff are open and honest about the pressures they are under, particularly with a lot of lone working taking place. However, they feel well supported by senior leaders and say they have a lot of opportunities to reflect on the practical and emotional challenges of their role. Staff are positive about the quality and frequency of supervision and training.

Senior leaders are closely involved in the day-to-day running of the home and the interim manager is grateful for their availability and support during a challenging period. The quality assurance manager's oversight has helped to drive forward improvements in day-to-day operations.

External professionals are positive about the quality of support for children and effective communication from the manager and her staff. There are plentiful examples of close partnership working leading to consistent practice that has promoted progress and positive outcomes for children.

The interim manager and her team promote an inclusive environment where children are free to express their identity with confidence. One child said that the atmosphere at school and in the home made him feel safe to be the person he wanted to be, without any fear or anxiety.

## 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 notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p>	<p>30 November 2022</p>

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any allegation of harm or abuse must be addressed in line with the home’s child protection policy. Where any deviation from this occurs, then this must form part of an approved strategy between all relevant stakeholders, e.g. when a child makes frequent false allegations. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 44, paragraph 9.17)
- The registered person should ensure that they consult with the home’s independent visitor to maximise opportunities for engaging with and capturing the feedback of all children and staff. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

### 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 & Adolescent Services Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 599a London Road, Cheam, Sutton SM3 9AG

**Responsible individual:** Gerard Berry

**Registered manager:** Helen Holt-Wells

## Inspectors

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector

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