

1241836

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and run by an education service provider. It is registered to care for up to seven children with complex needs that may include autism and associated difficulties. The home is located on the provider's school campus. There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision on this site.

The registered manager post has been vacant since 18 February 2022.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 November 2023

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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/07/2022	Full	Good
14/09/2021	Full	Good
04/02/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/03/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Living in this home enhances children's well-being and provides them with a safe environment to develop, have fun and grow in confidence.

Staff provide child-centred and nurturing care to the children. The children enjoy trusting relationships with the staff and seek out reassurance and affection from them. Staff respond to the children with kindness, respect and care.

The manager and the staff advocate well for the children. This helps to ensure that the children are involved in planning their moves into and out of the home. For example, staff have worked proactively with a child (and their family) who is preparing for a move to a new home and a new college.

Most of the children are in education and are making progress. Staff recognise and celebrate their achievements. Staff are attentive and have a good understanding of the children's health needs. They ensure that children are supported to attend medical appointments, including those with the specialist health services that some of the children require.

Staff recognise that participation in the local community enriches the children's life experiences and well-being. Children have opportunities to go on holidays and have a range of interesting activities to take part in and enjoy. The children particularly enjoy having annual passes so that they can regularly visit theme parks.

Children who are new to the home are welcomed sensitively and with thorough planning. Staff receive specialist bespoke training to meet children's needs. However, not all staff have completed training in the specific communication systems that children use. This means that sometimes staff are not making the best use of the tools that are designed to support the children's language development.

How well children are helped and protected: good

Staff are confident about what action to take if they have a concern about a child. In addition, the staff have a good awareness of the extra vulnerabilities and risks for children with disabilities. There is a strong safeguarding culture that runs throughout the home. This is reflected well in staff supervision sessions, where staff are encouraged to develop their knowledge of safeguarding matters.

The staff know the children very well. As a result, they can identify when a child is sad, upset or worried, even when a child is unable to verbally communicate this. Staff help the children to keep themselves safe and provide children with helpful guidance through a range of social stories.

The manager and staff work in partnership with the children's parents. Staff make a conscious effort to ensure that families feel welcome, and they provide emotional

and practical support for the children to maintain their family relationships. Staff recognise the importance of the protective and enduring relations between the children and their families. This helps the children to sustain important attachments.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through praise. Staff use strategies that consider the children's communication and learning needs. This supports the children to make positive choices. Physical intervention is rarely used. Positive behaviour plans are clear. However, they could be further strengthened by including written consideration of children's age, size, health or medical needs.

The manager and staff promote an inclusive and welcoming home environment. Staff proactively support the children's diversity and culture in creative ways. As a result, the children feel accepted and develop a positive self-image.

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

There has been no registered manager at the home since February 2022. The new manager has now submitted her application to register with Ofsted. However, the home has been without a registered manager for a significant period.

There have been changes to the senior management team and staffing at the home since the last inspection. This includes the appointment of a new responsible individual in August 2023. Senior leaders have not consistently been a visible presence in the home. Changes in the organisation and the planned relocation of the home have further contributed to an undercurrent of instability and low morale among some of the staff. However, the new responsible individual is now visiting regularly. The impact of these changes on the children has been mitigated by the manager, who was previously the deputy manager in the home, and a core of long-standing staff who have provided stability and consistency throughout.

Staff receive regular and effective supervision that covers a wide variety of topics, including development, reflection and a review of the children's needs. Managers provide a high level of support to the staff team, along with appropriate challenge, to ensure that the children receive the best possible care.

Leaders and managers have failed to embed an effective process for the renewal of staff Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks. As a result, a small number of staff have not had their DBS checks renewed in line with the organisation's policy. Measures have now been taken to address this, including regular monitoring and reminders. In addition, the staff concerned have risk assessments in place and have not worked unsupervised with the children.

Managers challenge other professionals when there are shortcomings or delays in services to children. Parents and professionals speak positively of the staff team. The previous requirements and recommendations have been met.

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, The 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.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs. In particular, ensure that staff receive training in children's specific communications systems they use at school and home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's plans take into account the risk that use of restraint carries. This includes the relevance of any disability, health problem or medication to the behaviour in question and the action that might be taken as a result. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.55)
- The registered person should ensure that as set out in regulations 31-33, they maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 1241836

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspris Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Aspris, The Forge, 43 Church Street West, Woking, Surrey GU21 6HT

Responsible individual: Helen Llewellyn

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Anne-Marie Davies, Social Care Inspector
Karen Flanagan de Martinez, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023