

1211772

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 owned and managed by a private company. It provides care and support for up to six children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager in the home since August 2023. An interim manager is in post, who has applied for registration with Ofsted.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home. The inspectors spoke to both children and observed them during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 June 2024

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: 22 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: notice of proposal issued with regards to registration of the proposed manager. Written representations have been received at the time of this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/12/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in the home are making progress. The children now go to school and have very good attendance. One child is sitting their exams. One child has expressed a desire to remain in the local area in the future. The children have made friendships locally, and they like their school. They have made positive links in their community.

Staff know the children well and care about their futures. They offer children opportunities to have fun and participate in fundraising. Staff help children to understand the importance of education. They read with younger children and support older children with their homework. The staff help children to achieve their best.

Children who live further away are supported by staff to remain close to their family and friends. Staff support the children to visit them and to have friends spend time in the home. One child has been able to move back in with their family. This was partly due to the progress they made while living at the home.

Children have warm and positive relationships with the manager and staff. The manager and team advocate for the children and encourage them to speak up if they are unhappy. The manager supports children to meet people who can help if they are worried about anything. They also share information when changes occur and make sure that children are kept informed of changes. Children know how to raise complaints.

The home is well equipped, clean and spacious. In the garden, grass is overgrown and there are nettles where children play. One child cannot access their clothes as they are stored in another room. Plans are in place to remove bedroom door alarms, but this is still to be done. This does not support children's independence and privacy.

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

Children's records are detailed and easy to read. The manager reviews them after any incidents and shares their findings. This ensures that staff are aware of any new risks and current strategies to support children. Where there are risks, staff use social stories, videos and discussions to help educate the children about the risks. This helps children to keep themselves safe.

Staff support children around their health and safe relationships. Older children are supported to learn about healthy relationships and consent. The manager communicates well with other professionals, and they also support the children with guidance and check on their understanding.

The manager understands their responsibility to safeguard children from going missing. A child left the home and did not want to come back initially. Even though they remained in touch with staff during this period, the manager recorded this as a missing-from-home

incident and demonstrated good practice in following up with the child on the reasons why they left the home, including arranging an independent return home interview. The child shared their reasons, and the staff helped the child to find solutions and understand the risks of going missing in the future.

The manager is challenging the practice around the use of consequences and the recording of incidents. Learning and progress can be seen after each incident, and the use of physical interventions has reduced, which is positive. Language used in recording reflects learning. However, behaviour records, including consequences, still contain language which is not objective and stigmatises children. When a child does not verbally share their views, the manager and staff do not always capture these in other ways.

Health and safety in the home are generally well managed. Risks in the local area have not been reviewed recently. Staff and children are not aware of any changes in the local area which may pose new risks to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager understands the strengths of the home and areas to improve. They have been leading the changes. Direct and open leadership has influenced the change of culture in the home. The team works in new ways learned through training to help the children understand their own emotions. Professionals commented on the more therapeutic approach the manager has brought to the home alongside their high aspirations for children.

One child who lives in the home has developing needs which the staff team is not able to meet. The manager has identified training and involved health professionals to develop the team's knowledge until a more suitable placement is identified. Managers and staff work sensitively with the child to meet their needs. This reassures the child.

Leaders and managers work closely with professionals involved with the children. They communicate effectively with them and keep plans and developing situations under constant review. The manager escalates concerns and is a strong advocate for children, championing their needs. Professionals respect and welcome the manager's advocacy on behalf of the children.

The manager has effective oversight of the home. The manager has implemented new auditing tools to help with this. The manager has clear oversight of children's plans and progress. Children's file systems have been simplified and are clear for staff to read and to use to record information. The records capture the children's progress.

The manager and staff team feel supported. Regular staff meetings are used to make changes collaboratively. The manager has worked hard to gain the trust of staff and to explain the reasons for implemented changes. Staff work with the manager as a team to make these changes and can see the positive changes for children.

Staff receive regular child-focused and reflective supervision, which also addresses their personal development. The manager carries out supervision and has recently delegated some of this responsibility to senior staff, following changes in the management team. Staff should be given support and training to develop their skills in this area.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve? Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii)(viii)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, the responsible individual must ensure that children have ease of access to their personal belongings.</p>	<p>27 August 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they have identified any stigmatising language recorded about the child in behaviour records. They should also have captured the child’s feedback through the child’s preferred communication method.

(‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 49, paragraph 9.59)

- The registered person should ensure that they keep under review the risks to each child in the area around the home and the arrangements in place to protect them. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: 1211772

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: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Carol Jagger, Social Care Inspector
Tenji Wesa, Social Care Inspector

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