

1247384

Registered provider: Solent Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to two children who have social and emotional difficulties.

There were two children living at the home at the time of inspection. Both were present during the inspection.

The registered manager has been in post since 21 March 2024.

This inspection was brought forward due to specific concerns and allegations received by Ofsted.

Staff are referred to as 'adults' in this report.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
29/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
02/03/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have the freedom to express themselves and choose activities they are excited about. Adults support them to expand their experiences and make memories. Children have enjoyed trips to farm parks and football matches and been on nature walks. There is a real sense of fun and adventure in the home. One child has proudly collected animal bones and feathers. Adults regularly engage in conversations with them about their interests and nurture these.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the adults, who nurture and care for them. Adults interact with children with warmth, interest and good humour. If a child is not ok, adults sensitively try to find out what is wrong and help them. This helps children to feel valued, to have fun and to be able to share their views and feelings.

Children live in a home that is comfortable and furnished with their needs in mind. The children's bedrooms are personalised, and communal areas are homely and child-friendly with lots of photos of the children on display. Children's enjoyment and progress, individually and together, are captured in memory books and photos around the home. This home feels like a family home. This helps children feel a sense of belonging and to be proud of their achievements.

Behaviour and support plans for children are detailed and reflect the children's individual complex needs as well as the model of care in the home. They consider the child's history and the reasons behind behaviours of distress. There is a focus on understanding children's communication and helping them to identify and communicate their feelings. This has helped children continue to make great progress in all areas of their lives.

Children are attending and making progress in education. When children's education is stalling, leaders advocate strongly for this to change. Adults promote education with children when at home, and they help children develop skills relevant to their age and development, such as self-care and baking.

Children's health needs are well met. They are encouraged to live a healthy lifestyle and helped to get medical attention when needed. Adults usually respond well to accidents involving children, providing first aid and seeking medical guidance if needed. On one occasion, when a child bit a glow stick and the liquid went in her eye, adults provided first aid, but they did not seek medical advice and the child's risk assessment was not updated.

Children's important relationships are valued and promoted, including helping them spend regular time with family. Family members are positive about the care that children receive. One parent said, 'They do a brilliant job, helping [name of child] enjoy school and loads of activities.'

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

The manager and other adults work hard to ensure the safety of children. They understand each child's particular vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to protect them from harm. Adults are guided by risk assessments that are detailed and regularly updated. When new risks emerge, the manager and adults respond quickly and work effectively with external agencies to safeguard children and reduce future risks.

There has been one incident when a child was missing from home. Adults followed procedures and worked swiftly in partnership with others to locate the child. Learning from this incident has informed changes in practice and there has not been a recurrence.

When allegations are made by children or there are concerns raised about the practice of adults, these are taken seriously and investigated appropriately in consultation with other professionals if needed. This helps ensure that children receive consistently safe care.

Physical restraint is only used when necessary and for the shortest time. There is strong, timely management oversight and review of practice when incidents occur, including physical restraint. This has helped adults to have a consistent approach and has led to fewer incidents when physical intervention has been required for one child.

Adults work hard to make sure that conflict between children is safely managed. Positive peer relationships are encouraged using creative strategies. An incentive and reward scheme using pom-poms has been effective in increasing healthy interactions between the children and promoting positive experiences together.

When new adults are employed, the manager ensures that all necessary checks are completed in line with regulations. This helps protect children from unsafe people.

Restrictive practices and monitoring devices that are in place, such as door alarms, are minimal, proportionate and used in the children's interests. However, they are not always underpinned by a written risk assessment, and there is no evidence to show that their use is regularly reviewed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is passionate about her role and the children. She has a good understanding of the children's individual needs, the progress they have made and the strengths and areas for development of the service. Leaders and managers are highly involved in the children's care. They have a deep understanding of the children and have strong relationships with them.

The manager has highly effective monitoring systems in place and has taken action to improve the quality of care. Reports and regular meetings with leaders provide insights

into children's behaviours and have informed changes that have resulted in a significant reduction in incidents of distress for one child.

Professionals who know the children are positive about the care that children receive and about communication from the home. The manager engages effectively with the wider team around the children and is a strong advocate for them. This supports a coordinated approach to meeting children's needs. One social care professional said, 'I cannot speak highly enough of the adults and of the difference that they have made to [name of child]'s life.'

Adults are experienced in caring for children and have received additional training to develop their skills when a specific need for children has emerged. This helps to ensure the children receive care from adults who are informed and can respond helpfully.

Children's views are important. They are at the centre of their care and sensitively involved in decisions. Adults take the time, care and attention to understand the views of children and use specific communication aids to assist this. Adults share children's wishes across the team to inform planning for things such as activities, meals and reward systems.

There have been several changes in staffing, and the team is quite new. Managers have worked hard to ensure that adults are provided with the right support and training to meet the children's needs and implement the model of care. Regular input for managers and the team from a qualified therapist supports a strong focus on children's needs and understanding the impact of previous experiences. Leaders and managers have reflected on the reasons for high adult turnover and are taking steps to address this in recognition of the importance of consistency for the children.

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

- The registered person should ensure that adults have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of children. In particular, this refers to seeking medical advice if appropriate following an accident and making sure safety plans are updated if needed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12).
- The registered person should ensure that any measures in place that limit children's privacy or freedom of movement are informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, are properly recorded and kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10).

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: 1247384

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Solent Child Care Limited

Registered provider address: 9 St Georges Yard, Castle Street, Farnham, Surrey GU9 7LW

Responsible individual: Katherine Sims

Registered manager: Yvette Hill

Inspectors

Jacob Robson, Social Care Inspector
Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector

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