

1276911

Registered provider: Aspireone Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered in October 2018 and is privately owned. It provides care for up to two children who may have a learning disability and/or have experienced childhood instability which has resulted in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The registered manager has been in post since November 2019. She is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 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 good

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

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2021	Full	Good
05/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children have lived at the home for five months. Children are settled and love living in the home. Two children who had previously lived at the home for a few years have successfully moved on in line with their pathway plans.

Children participate and give their view during weekly house meetings. Meetings are meaningful and managers review children's requests. A child made a request for a new chair for the lounge, and this was purchased. This means children feel listened to and know that staff do their best to act on their requests.

Staff encourage children to share any grumbles before they become complaints. A child showed the inspector a soft toy that is used to help children tell staff and managers what is on their mind. A child said, 'It's the worry monster. I write on paper my thoughts and put it in his mouth.' This creative method helps children share their thoughts and feelings. However, the children's guide has not been updated to reflect this good practice. Furthermore, children do not yet have access to an advocate as stated in the statement of purpose.

Both children are making considerable progress since their starting point. One child has returned to mainstream school and is preparing for his exams. He thoroughly enjoys school, invests in added time to revise for his exams, and has an excellent attendance record, only having time off to attend health appointments. This is a remarkable shift from his starting point. A parent said, 'Since [Name of the child] has been with you guys, I have noticed that he is a lot happier, and I am so grateful for that.'

Children are supported to access health services specific to their needs. One child is now able to self-medicate. He understands his complex health and medical needs and actively works hard to improve his well-being. He is more conscious about his diet and fitness and puts effort into increasing his health. This is proved in his daily life choices, such as eating healthily and going to the gym. A social worker said, 'They have a real understanding of [Name of the child's] complex health needs and have supported him during his appointments.'

Children enjoy living in the home. They have access to a range of activities in and outside the home, for example going to the gym, go-karting and the cinema. As a result, children's confidence in accessing the community improve. One child is a member of the Children in Care Council. A professional said, 'Now he is going to take part in a panel for interviewing foster carers.'

Children respect each other's differences. One child has taken the time to learn more about the child that he lives with. He is keen to learn what it means to live with autism spectrum disorder. This means he is better informed about how to

understand other children's needs. As a result, both children have positive group living experiences.

Staff ensure that children are supported to develop their independence skills. Since moving in one child has learned a range of skills, including cooking his own meals, planning his menus alongside his budget for shopping. Staff prepare children well for their futures. Two children who previously lived at the home for several years were well prepared for leaving care and had a seamless transition on from the home.

Staff are always on hand to support children to stay connected with those who are important to them. Children like to spend time with their family and friends. Staff support arrangements where necessary. Relationships with family are improving.

The home is maintained to a high standard and offers warmth and nurture, and is welcoming. However, unused locks on one child's bedroom door have not been removed. This gives the impression of an institutional feel.

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

Children are safe and protected from harm. Children living in the home do not go missing or exhibit challenging behaviour. Staff are attuned to the needs of each child. They work exceptionally well with children to implement the behaviour management plans required to support their individual needs. Children are becoming pillars of society.

Since the last inspection in May 2021, there has been one incident of physical restraint used for one child. Staff work with children to devise their own behaviour management plans. This helps staff to recognise the triggers for challenging behaviour, and to support children with de-escalating strategies to manage behaviour that may challenge. As a result, restraint is only used as a last resort.

Risk is managed well. The children know and understand the fire procedure. Both children have personal evacuation plans in place. This ensures that children can evacuate the home safely in the event of a fire. A social worker said, 'He informed me he has never felt unsafe, and the staff always ensure that he is ok in those moments. In fact, he says he always feels safe at the home.'

Managers ensure that children's risks are considered before new children are placed in the home. This ensures that both the child already living in the home and the child preparing to live there can safely live in the same environment. Where risk is found, sufficient measures are in place to manage the risk.

The home is welcoming and homely. Communal spaces are suitable to meet the children's individual needs. However, managers have not revisited the home's risk assessment in terms of locking communal rooms at night. Staff told the inspector the home has always been locked down at night. Staff also confirmed that the two children living in the home do not display behaviour that is a concern and there have not been any reports to provide evidence that the children leave their rooms at

night. Risk has not been reviewed to reflect the good progress the children are making to keep themselves safe. This means children's access to the home environment is restricted for no good reason. This is a missed opportunity to demonstrate the progress the children are making to stay safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced registered manager went on maternity leave on 3 February 2023. There is a suitably qualified acting manager overseeing the home in the registered manager's absence. She has been in post since 1 December 2022 and has applied to register. The interim manager is familiar with the home and previously worked there before qualifying as a social worker.

The manager oversees the home and spends time with children. She is skilled in checking the home to ensure that it is running effectively. Workforce development plans identify the home's strengths and weaknesses that help the manager to review and improve practice. Staff are positive about the manager and describe her as being supportive.

Staff receive good-quality training to enhance their learning skills, which are required to support children's individual needs. However, not all staff have completed training in relation to autism spectrum disorder. This has the potential to hinder staff's ability to manage children's learning needs effectively.

Staff are supervised, appraised and supported to further develop their skills. This effective oversight and support give staff opportunities to review and improve practice.

The independent visitor completes monitoring every month. There has been changes to the independent visitor since the last inspection. Since the changes have been made, the manager is receiving a more thorough review of the home. This ensures that recommendations raised assist in improving the service.

Feedback from external professionals is positive. A professional said, 'The home is really run well. As a manager of three residential homes in my previous employment, I can honestly say that the home is a home. They engage the young people well, communicate effectively and ensure the children really feel safe and well cared for, and [Name of one of the children in care] is currently thriving in placement.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that for children's homes to seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression and remove any surplus locks on bedroom doors. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that all children must have access to appropriate advocacy support, and where possible this should be provided by a person that the child chooses. Looked-after children are entitled to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide should help children to understand how to make a complaint in line with the home's complaints procedure. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person should ensure that staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should support staff to receive training, in particular in relation to autism spectrum disorder. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

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: 1276911

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Aspireone Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 4 Lyme Vale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands Business Park, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 6NW

Responsible individual: Kalvinder Bains

Registered manager: Amy Powell

Inspector

Michelle Spruce, Social Care Inspector

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