

2613488

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of a small number of short-break children's services operated by a private provider.

This children's home is registered to provide short breaks and support for up to three children who may have learning disabilities or sensory impairments.

The manager has been in post since the home was registered in November 2020.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 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	requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: 9 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

A full assessment of children's needs is undertaken before a child stays overnight. The staff plan children's breaks carefully. This minimises anxiety for the children and ensures that the staff team is able to meet the children's individual needs.

There are currently a small number of children using breaks. This helps the staff to get to know each child well. They provide a bespoke and child-centred service. One parent said that the care was planned for the child's individual needs and the service compared favourably with other short-breaks services. This approach has helped families to trust the manager and staff. As a result, the staff have built very positive relationships with the children and their families.

The staff provide a range of on-site activities and keep the children constantly engaged. The staff take the children out, when possible, for local walks or trips out further afield on the bus. The staff take careful note of which activities the children very much enjoy and make adjustments according to children's needs.

The house is maintained and has equipment to provide suitable care for disabled children. However, the decor in some areas is rather bare and is beginning to wear. This undermines the otherwise good-quality accommodation.

The children's guide has recently been updated. However, the guide does not contain all of the required information, such as details of the children's commissioner. The overuse of widget symbols means this information could overwhelm children and is not easy for children to understand.

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

Significant incidents are rare and there are no concerns regarding the safety and well-being of children.

The staff keep the children safe through good supervision and understanding of the children's particular vulnerabilities. The children trust the staff. This is demonstrated through children seeking out particular staff for company or a cuddle.

The children have individual behaviour support plans, which guide the staff. The staff understand the children's behaviour as a means of communication. They seek to understand what the child needs while maintaining clear boundaries.

The staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. They put the children's safety and best interests at the centre of their practice. However, some staff are not aware of whistle-blowing procedures and how to contact someone who is independent.

The staff who administer medication and carry out and complex care tasks are suitably trained. Regular practical assessments ensure that their ongoing competence is assessed. This supports the children's complex health needs.

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

The manager is experienced and suitably qualified. However, there is a lack of effective management oversight and, as a result, several shortfalls have been identified.

The staff benefit from a variety of relevant and suitable training. However, the manager has not ensured that all staff undertake first-aid training. Consequently, there are a number of shifts without staff who have a suitable first-aid qualification. Although, the staff have training in epilepsy management and resuscitation, the staff may not know how to respond to an accidental injury.

The staff feel well supported by the manager and the healthcare lead. They benefit from regular supervision and open-door management style. However, the staff do not have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised once every year. This does not fully support the staff's development with a formal procedure.

Record-keeping is not consistently effective. Poor file management means that the most up-to-date versions of children's risk assessments and care plans are not on file. Some meetings have no date, and a copy of one staff's identity documents were held on another staff's file. It is difficult to see how these files are monitored, which reduces their effectiveness.

The manager has addressed the requirements raised at the last inspection.

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
The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first-aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2)(a))	26 August 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(c))	26 August 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should provide a nurturing, homely environment. In particular, ensure that all areas of the home are decorated to a consistently high standard. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should produce a children’s guide in an accessible format. In particular, include how to contact the Office of the Children’s Commissioner. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person should build a strong safeguarding culture. In particular, ensure that the staff know how to raise safeguarding and whistle-blowing concerns outside of the home. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 43, paragraph 9.8)
- Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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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: 2613488

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: 80 Compair Crescent, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 0EH

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Michelle Gill

Inspector

Joanna Heller, Social Care Inspector

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