

SC478616

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered with Ofsted in October 2014. It offers care for up to four children aged from nine to 17 years who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2023.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 December 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 **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 25 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2023	Full	Good
09/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/09/2021	Full	Good
17/06/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make substantial progress with the support of a dedicated and caring staff team. Staff can demonstrate positive outcomes for children and have been successful in supporting older children towards independence and transitions into adult services. Staff have also shown skill in settling new children into the home successfully. They celebrate children's achievements and demonstrate immense pride in their accomplishments. Staff have successfully stabilised education arrangements for every child. Children benefit from well-planned and tailored approaches to education, which maximises their chance of success.

Staff and children share positive relationships based on mutual respect and affection. Children have trust in the adults who support them. They readily seek advice and guidance. Children are universally positive about their experiences living at the home.

Dedicated staff ensure that the home is well maintained and thoughtfully decorated. At the time of this inspection, the home was full of seasonal decorations and lighting, creating a magical atmosphere. Children can personalise their rooms, and their living spaces exude personality.

Children are confident to express their views and opinions. Staff do a particularly good job at including children in planning their own personal goals. They ensure that written records and plans fully represent the voice of each child. Staff also advocate for children effectively in multi-agency discussions, championing their views and wishes passionately.

Children have access to full and varied lives in the home and in the wider community. Staff have had success in integrating children into local clubs and projects. This has motivated and inspired children to have high aspirations for what they can achieve.

Staff maintain memory books for children which capture children's activities and experiences during their time at the home. Children take these with them when they move on from the home, which allows them to reflect on their journey and self-development during their time in care.

Staff support children who are negotiating complex family and social relationships to manage the emotional impact of their life situations. Staff maintain open and frank dialogue with children, which helps them to work through challenging circumstances.

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

Staff support children with elevated levels of vulnerability both in the home and in the community. The registered manager ensures that staff are well trained and have the necessary skills to carry out this challenging work. As a result, safeguarding practice is effective. Staff training has been individually tailored to help them understand the

identified vulnerabilities of children at the home. This means that staff have been able to manage elevated levels of risk while preserving autonomy for children and allowing them to take acceptable risks to develop their independence.

Staff maintain clear and precise records pertaining to safeguarding, including missing-from-care episodes. They ensure that chronologies are detailed and that all relevant correspondence, strategy discussions and inter-agency work are retained in an accessible format.

Staff have a clear understanding of children's specific vulnerabilities and create highly individualised safety plans for each child. Staff's ability to safeguard effectively has allowed the children to live full and rich lives in the home and in the community.

The registered manager has developed strong relationships with safeguarding partners and takes an active role in all joint working and meetings. This ensures that children receive a rounded and consistent approach from professionals to promote their safety in all aspects of their lives, including education and social activities.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is confident and proud of the home environment she has created for children. She has a clear vision for the care and support she wants children to receive and she models this superbly to her team. The registered manager's 'no limits' attitude to what children can achieve is clear. Her determination to provide exceptional care for children is tangible.

The registered manager makes good use of high-quality systems to monitor the quality of care. She uses her insight to reflect and identify areas for growth and development. She has created ambitious plans for the future of the home and included staff and children in this process. The registered manager's plans lack specificity around timescales and accountability to support her to monitor progress against her identified targets.

The registered manager has been able to successfully implement huge improvements in the quality of care since the last inspection. Progress for children is better identified and recorded by all staff. Educational engagement has transformed in the last year. The registered manager's drive to ensure that all staff have a detailed and bespoke understanding of children's individual needs has enhanced children's experience of care and support.

The registered manager is clear that one of the primary areas for focus is a more consistent and stable leadership structure at the home after major changes last year. The responsible individual has collaborated closely with the registered manager to address this, and both are optimistic that the year ahead will bring stability to the home.

Staff feel well supported and praise the open and supportive style of the registered manager. The manager sees supervision as a vital part of staff development. She is

introducing more reflective and trauma-informed elements to supervision sessions to allow staff to process the complexity and emotional impact of the work that they do.

Feedback about the manager from professionals who work with the home is highly positive. The registered manager engenders trust and respect. She is also seen by others as a powerful advocate for the children she looks after.

The registered manager places the needs of children at the heart of everything she does. She has created a myriad of ways for children to engage in decision-making and feedback about their lives in the home. As a result, children feel listened to and valued. Children universally praised the leadership team and are fully confident that staff 'have their backs' at all times.

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

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. In particular, the use of time-specific, targeted goals and actions in the home's development plan would provide more accountability and allow the registered person to assess progress against set targets. ('Guide to the Children's Homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: SC478616

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Acorn Homes (UK) Ltd

Registered provider address: Units 73 and 74 Maple Leaf Business Park, Manston, Ramsgate CT12 5GD

Responsible individual: Sophie Wood

Registered manager: Angela Jarvis

Inspectors

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector
Salean Bryant, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 2025