

2720618

Registered provider: SV Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered with Ofsted in February 2023 and is privately run. It provides care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2025.

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 July 2026

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: 22 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/07/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/04/2024	Full	Good
06/06/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

This home has improved significantly since the last inspection. Leaders and managers have continued to embed therapeutic and trauma-informed approaches to supporting children and have implemented stronger monitoring and oversight of practice. A commissioned psychotherapist visits the home weekly and provides individual assessments and care planning for children, as well as one-to-one sessions to provide therapy as needed. The psychotherapist also works with staff to help them to understand and respond to children's needs. Children are making progress from their starting points. For example, missing-from-home episodes are reducing and children are returning to education or employment. Partnership working is a strength, both with health professionals and the virtual school. Three recommendations have been made, regarding management scrutiny of incidents, reducing unnecessary police involvement and managing allegations from children effectively.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Leaders, managers and staff members know the children well. They take time to engage with children, enabling trusting relationships to develop. Staff encourage children to engage in activities both inside and outside the home. These include cooking, decorating and organising bedroom space, as well as ice-skating and having their nails done.

Staff have a good understanding of the children's needs. They have cared for children who have been subject to deprivation of liberty orders (DOLs) while living at the home. At times, this has meant high ratios of staff to children, but this has been managed sensitively and kept under review, enabling children to have more free time as they have progressed. Their DOL orders have now ceased.

Children experience well-planned transitions into the home. Effective multi-agency partnership work ensures that introductory visits are planned and that training is in place, for example regarding children's specific health needs. Appropriate and well-devised transition documents are used to assess the suitability of children moving into the home, to ensure that existing children's needs are considered and that the needs of all of the children can be met.

Positive partnership working with the wider multi-agency team around the child is effective. For example, child and adolescent mental health service workers have been involved in attending and supporting staff training to understand therapeutic approaches and trauma-informed care. The manager, supported by the home's commissioned psychotherapist, has provided consultation and training on how to better manage behaviours and reduce the need for police intervention that could criminalise children.

The provider's psychotherapist is available to the home for 4 hours each week. The psychotherapist completes monthly 'team around the child' meetings, offering consultation to staff and/or direct sessions for children. This input is supporting staff to understand complex needs and how to help and protect children better.

Children are making positive progress from their starting points. For example, episodes of going missing are reducing, and children are getting back into school and work after long absences. The children are increasing in confidence as their skills and relationships develop.

The home is comfortable and clean, with some personalisation, although the summer house in the garden is not functional and not all areas of the home feel homely.

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

The registered manager and the staff have a good understanding of the needs of the children living at the home. Throughout the inspection, there were high levels of staffing to meet children's needs and to provide the agreed ratios of staff to manage children safely, including going out with them on activities.

Detailed risk assessments and behaviour support plans identify the support that children need, including recognising behavioural triggers and techniques for de-escalating challenging behaviour. They are comprehensive documents that are written sensitively to children. They have been informed by the input of the psychotherapist and follow the home's approach to trauma-informed and therapeutic practice.

Staff are trained in physical interventions. Although they only use these as a last resort, the number of physical restraints has increased. These incidents are well recorded and include debriefs for children and staff. However, some incidents have escalated and could possibly have been avoided or their severity reduced by more effective early intervention.

At times, children have experienced practice that they felt was restrictive and there have been a number of police call-outs. Although restrictions have been used with the best intentions, to try to keep children safe, there is an emerging theme of staff calling the police to support behaviour management, including the use of physical restraint and applying restrictions on spending pocket money. The leaders and managers are aware of these concerns and have already started to work to change approaches, with some positive effect. The psychotherapist is supporting the registered manager to help to support staff's understanding of behaviour and to offer advice and guidance on how to be more consistent when facing some very complex behaviours.

Incidents of going missing from the home are reducing and have been well managed. Staff follow the missing-from-home protocol closely and ensure that children are offered a return home interview to talk about any worries they might have at the home. Episodes of going missing are generally well recorded.

One complaint investigation has been ongoing. While the complaint is complex, it has nevertheless taken too long to reach a resolution.

Safer recruitment processes are in place. They are appropriate and are helping to ensure that staff caring for the children are suitably vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a consistent registered manager in post who has grown in confidence since the last inspection and has been able to demonstrate skills and knowledge in ensuring that the children have the support they need. Working as a team with the responsible individual and the deputy manager, they have been embedding a therapeutic approach with the staff. Leaders and managers demonstrate a clear understanding of all the children, the needs of the staff and the priorities for the development of the home.

Staff speak very positively about the managers, noting their clear expectations and the supportive and helpful approach provided to improve the quality of care for the children.

Leaders have used the expertise of multi-agency professionals and the in-house clinician to enable staff to develop a greater understanding of the management of complex needs and to embed the therapeutic approach. The registered manager recognises that practice is not always consistent.

Team meetings are held monthly. They are informative and child focused, and they are also used to embed the therapeutic model and trauma-informed approach. Meetings have clear actions and follow up to support children's progress and to keep them safe.

Training for staff is comprehensive and aligns with the model of practice. In addition, specific training to meet the individual needs of the children is well thought through and child focused.

Supervision is held monthly and recorded well. Written records of supervision and meetings are detailed, reflective and support staff to understand children's needs and apply the home's model of practice. The provider has employed a development officer, who is supporting staff development and succession planning and bringing a stronger focus on staff wellbeing and progression.

Leaders have good oversight of most records and have identified a need to improve the quality of recording. The oversight and quality assurance systems have been much improved since the last inspection. The requirements made at the last full inspection in July 2025 have been met and the action plan to further improve is ongoing.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the principles as set out in paragraph 9.35 are respected. The general principles for behaviour management in children's homes include: treating each child with understanding, dignity, kindness and respect; building, protecting and preserving positive relationships between each child and the adults caring for them; understanding each child's behaviour to allow their needs, aspirations, experiences and strengths to be recognised and their quality of life to be enhanced; involving children and relevant others wherever practical in behaviour management; supporting each child to balance safety from injury (harm) with making appropriate choices; making sure the child's rights are upheld. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should agree with their local police force, procedures and guidance on police involvement with the home to reduce unnecessary police involvement in managing behaviour and criminalisation of behaviours. Children should not be charged with offences resulting from behaviour in a children's home that would not similarly lead to police involvement if it occurred in a family home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.40)
- The registered person should ensure that children are listened to and enabled to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity. Staff should report any allegation of abuse immediately to a senior manager in the home. Any allegation of harm or abuse must be addressed in line with the home's child protection policy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.17)

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: 2720618

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SV Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: Arise Innovation Hub, Alan Cherry Drive, Chelmsford
CM1 1QT

Responsible individual: Hayley Perrett

Registered manager: Luvuyo Maze

Inspector

Christine Kennet, social care inspector

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