

# SC448209

Registered provider: Amberleigh Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide long-term specialist therapeutic care for up to 13 boys.

The home is led by an experienced manager who registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

The provider also has a school on the same site, which is open to children living at the home. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision on this site. Education inspectors inspected the school at the same time.

### Inspection dates: 24 and 25 October 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:** 9 November 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
09/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
22/02/2022	Full	Good
01/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/09/2018	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Since the last inspection, seven children have left the home and eight children have moved in. There were 12 children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Children are supported to make good progress in their lives. Staff know them well and they provide individualised, consistent and therapeutic support. Staff understand children's starting points and celebrate their progress and achievements. Children feel valued and respected in the home.

The quality of relationships that staff build with children is a priority in this home. A diverse and dedicated team of staff make significant efforts to get to know all children well. Children are encouraged to use good manners and to respect one another as individuals. This culture enables children to develop meaningful relationships with staff and make good progress.

Children's views and wishes are central to the running of the home. Staff use creative and innovative ways to encourage children to contribute to their own plans. For example, children lead and chair community meetings as part of the home's therapeutic community. Children have roles and responsibilities to develop their independence skills and self-confidence. One child summarised this creative approach by saying, 'Our voices are heard in this home. We have responsibility and are treated with respect and our opinions matter.'

Staff support children to thrive and achieve in their education. All children attend the provider's school on the same site. This allows staff and teachers to work closely together to support children's individual learning needs. One child has made excellent progress and has started college since the last inspection. This collaborative approach means that children think and speak positively about their future aspirations.

Staff recognise the importance for children of seeing loved ones. They ensure that family time is promoted, and they prioritise this. Also, family members and loved ones regularly attend the home's award ceremonies. This allows them to share and celebrate children's memories and successes.

Staff promote children's health needs well. Children receive support from the home's therapy team and staff work in partnership with the therapy team to deliver focused and meaningful work to children. This approach helps children to learn about sensitive areas specific to them, in a safe and well-planned environment.

Overall, children's transitions in and out of the home are managed effectively. Transitions into the home are planned, and the management team assesses children's needs and risks sensitively. One child who recently moved into the home

said they had visited the home and school before moving in, met staff and felt supported. This reassurance had helped the child to settle quickly.

When children leave the home, staff work hard to support the transition. They provide children with memory books. However, since the last inspection, three children's endings have not been positive or in line with their care plans. The management team has recognised this and is taking action to make improvements to their care planning process.

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

Children say that they feel safe living in the home. Staff ensure that there are clear boundaries and expectations for children, which help to keep them safe. Children say they understand the rules and know who to speak to if they have any worries or concerns. Staff also know the children well and respond effectively to meet their complex needs. Consequently, children feel safe and well supported.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort to manage significant incidents when children become anxious. Managers review incidents and debriefs are completed to provide staff and children with opportunities to discuss and learn from incidents. As a result, children feel reassured and learn from their experiences.

Systems to manage children's safety online and when using the internet are good. Children know and understand the systems staff use to keep them safe. Children respond well to this approach and know what is expected of them.

Leaders respond appropriately to children making allegations and disclosing sensitive information. The management team acts quickly to involve the relevant agencies. Consequently, internal investigations have been thorough and appropriate actions have been taken to safeguard children. However, poor staff practice identified after staff have left employment is not routinely investigated.

Staff do not consistently respond to incidents when children go missing from the home. On occasions, staff have attempted to follow children and keep them safe. They have searched the local area to locate children and return them to the home. However, when these initial measures have not been successful and children have not been found, staff do not routinely search for children. On one occasion, a child was missing from the home for six days and despite staff having intelligence that the child was in a known area, no searches of that area took place. This has the potential to leave children vulnerable and to compromise their safety.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The registered manager is experienced, suitably qualified and leads the home effectively. He has high expectations and ensures that children are supported to make progress in all areas of their lives. He is supported by an organised and ambitious deputy manager who is keen to learn and develop. In addition, senior

leaders are proactive and supportive and this has created a culture in the home where children and staff feel happy and valued.

Staff feel well supported and were overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive from the management team. They receive regular and reflective supervision and appraisals. These sessions provide staff with a platform to continually improve their practice. One staff member said, 'I have never had the support I get here in other homes I have worked.' Another staff member said, 'I love working in this home.'

Staff receive regular training which is relevant to the specific needs of the children. For example, a range of training in safeguarding, medication and therapeutic practice ensures that staff have the appropriate skills to care for children. Most staff have the required qualification for working with children. Other staff are working towards the qualification within the relevant timescales. As a result, a suitably qualified and experienced staff team provides good-quality care for children.

Management oversight and monitoring processes are creative and reflective. Internal and external audits help to review the care that children receive. The registered manager and senior management team know the home's strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, leaders take action to address any shortfalls and identify areas for improvement. For example, senior leaders shared plans they have to appoint a deputy manager responsible for developing children's independence skills.

Leaders work in partnership with parents and external professionals. Children receive well-organised packages of care and education. External professionals provided positive feedback about the care that children receive. One professional said, 'Staff provide opportunities that the children otherwise would be unlikely to access and staff go above and beyond.' Another professional said, 'I am happy with the care the child receives and they are making progress.'

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

- The registered person should ensure that staff are aware of the procedures to be followed and the actions they should take when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)

## **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:** SC448209

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Amberleigh Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** Amberleigh Care Ltd, Golfa Hall, Golfa, Welshpool, Powys SY21 9AF

**Responsible individual:** Kevin Gallagher

**Registered manager:** Simon Roberts

## Inspectors

Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

Kev Brammer, Social Care Inspector

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