

1233310

Registered provider: Birtenshaw

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a large charitable organisation. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and have learning disabilities.

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

The home has been without a registered manager since 6 November 2024. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 7 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 17 September 2024

Judgement at last inspection requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The new manager in post has taken effective action to address many of the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. He has developed robust systems to ensure that he has appropriate management oversight of the day-to-day running of the home and the progress children are making.

Both children living at the home have been there for several years and are cared for by a nurturing, child-centred and enthusiastic staff team. Staff have a good understanding of children's vulnerabilities and complex needs, and they provide stable and predictable routines that offer children the stability they need. As a result, children are making progress in many aspects of their lives.

Children continue to have excellent attendance at school. The manager has ensured that he now has the appropriate up-to-date information regarding children's educational progress. This enables staff to have a clear understanding and offer the appropriate support to meet children's learning needs.

Children's health needs are being met. The manager now ensures that children receive appropriate support from other health professionals when needed to promote their physical and emotional well-being.

Staff provide a safe and nurturing environment through high levels of supervision and support in line with children's assessed needs. Staff understand the children's risks and vulnerabilities and respond appropriately. As a result, any incidents are well managed. Staff use de-escalation strategies and their positive relationships with the children to prevent escalation. There have been no physical interventions.

Staff have a good understanding of the children's emotional and communication needs. Children's views are regularly sought and encouraged using their preferred communication methods, and each child has a communication passport. Following incidents, the manager ensures that staff use the Picture Exchange Communication System to gain the views of the child.

The physical environment of the home is clean and tidy. However, there are still repairs to walls that need addressing. This affects the warm and welcoming environment the manager is trying to create.

The new manager is highly committed, child centred and has a good understanding of children's needs. He has high expectations and aspirations for the children in his care and has applied to register with Ofsted. The manager has carried out a review of the quality of the care provided. However, he has not ensured that he has gathered feedback from staff to give him a full overview.

The staff team is stable and committed to achieving positive outcomes for children. Staff say they have seen a positive change since the new manager has been in post. They feel that the manager is supportive in giving them more responsibility in helping in the smooth running of the home and developing their practice. This gives staff a feeling of shared ownership.

The manager now ensures that staff receive regular supervision, which gives them an opportunity to reflect on their practice and how they meet children's specific needs. However, not all staff have received an annual appraisal.

Staff receive appropriate training that helps develop their skills and knowledge. The manager has ensured that additional training on the importance of good recording and report writing has been completed. This ensures that there is clear evidence of the actions staff take to keep children safe. However, not all staff have completed their appropriate qualifications within the necessary time frame. The manager is now working closely with the assessor, so he has a good understanding of the progress the staff are making towards achieving their awards.

In respect of the recommendations raised at the last inspection, five have been met and four have been restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/09/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/11/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2022	Full	Good
11/01/2022	Full	Good

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, The 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered provider must ensure that issues of maintenance in the home are addressed. This specifically relates to the repairs to the walls in the living room and dining area.	8 March 2025
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is—	8 March 2025

in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or

in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.

The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—

does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or

works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))

In particular, the registered provider must ensure that staff have completed their qualifications within the appropriate time frames.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulations at least every six months. This should include feedback from staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are given an opportunity to have their performance appraised each year to address any practice issues. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1233310

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birtenshaw

Registered provider address: Birtenshaw Darwen Road, Bromley Cross, Bolton
BL7 9AB

Responsible individual: David Reid

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Simon Jones, 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 children looked after, 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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

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