

1241023

Registered provider: Treehouse Educare Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by an organisation that also operates a registered school on the same site.

The children's home provides care for up to 8 children across 2 different houses. One house provides care for up to 4 children who may experience social, emotional or mental health difficulties. One house provides care for up to 4 children with learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, 5 children were living at the children's home. The inspectors only inspected the social care provision on this site.

The home has not had a registered manager since October 2025.

Inspection date: 10 February 2026

Date of last inspection: 1 October 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have 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

At this assurance inspection, the following serious and widespread concerns were identified in relation to the care and protection of children and leadership and management:

- Management arrangements are not sufficient to ensure that children receive good-quality care.
- There is a lack of identified learning from investigations relating to concerns about staff practice.
- Systems for the monitoring and reviewing of staff practice do not result in the provision of consistent and effective support to staff.
- Plans to move children into the home are not sufficiently well considered; as a result, some children have moved out more quickly than expected.

This assurance inspection was carried out following a judgement of requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection in October 2025.

One requirement has been met since the last inspection. The requirements that have not been addressed have been restated.

Leadership and management arrangements are not effective. The registered manager left in October 2025, and the current manager is absent. As a result, the home is being led by a new interim deputy manager, alongside the responsible individual. The responsible individual is struggling to oversee the home effectively, which has led to shortfalls in children's care and in staff practice.

Children in one house have had limited positive experiences because some children were admitted without staff having the full or correct information needed. Key risks and the location of the home were not always considered, and moves into the home have not been well planned. This has led to unsafe placements that end quickly, showing that assessments before children move in are not effective. These unsuitable arrangements have affected children's safety and stability.

Children, generally, have good relationships with staff, but one child with complex needs is not being supported well enough. The information available to staff lacks detail and does not give clear guidance on how to meet the child's needs. Safeguarding actions that should have been completed have also not been carried out consistently. This has created gaps in care and increased the risk of the child not receiving the necessary support.

The needs of some children admitted into one house did not meet the admission criteria. The responsible individual has agreed to review this to make sure that any future admissions are properly aligned and the home will only care for children whose needs are in accordance with its statement of purpose.

Leadership and management oversight in the home is weak. The systems used to oversee the quality of care are not effective. For instance, checks failed to reveal poor practice, and there are repeated gaps in oversight. As a result, weaknesses have not been identified and important issues have gone unnoticed for some time.

Leaders and managers have not handled some serious safeguarding concerns effectively. When a child alleged that they had been involved in an incident with another young person, the concern was not investigated promptly, and neither the child nor the staff involved were given clear direction or immediate support. In addition, the actions taken were not recorded. This poor response increases risk, leaves children without the help that they need and prevents managers and staff from learning from serious incidents.

When children make allegations about staff, leaders take immediate action to safeguard them. However, the investigations rely only on the outcomes from external professionals, and there is no internal learning for staff. This means that opportunities to improve practice are missed, increasing the risk of similar incidents happening again.

Some staff have been subject to investigations where misconduct was found. However, they did not subsequently receive structured support, and leaders and managers did not implement any wider learning to address the concerns. Because of this, the same practice issues have recurred, showing that lessons are not being learned and improvements are not being made.

Several staff members have left since the last inspection and more are due to leave soon. As a result, the home is relying more heavily on agency staff to care for the children. This reduces consistency and makes it harder for the children to build stable, trusting relationships with the adults supporting them.

Since the last inspection, staff have received additional training to help them to meet children's needs. However, staff have not always put this learning into practice. Known risks have not been consistently managed. For example, the environment has not always been kept free from hazards. This shows gaps between training and day-to-day practice, leaving children exposed to avoidable risks.

Staff from both houses are now working together. One staff member said that the team feels more supportive because they have regular opportunities to work alongside each other.

Both houses were clean and tidy during the inspection. Staff are now consistently helping children to keep their bedrooms clean and organised, using this as a chance to build their independence skills. This approach is helping children to develop practical life skills and a sense of pride in their environment.

Improvements have been made to how children are kept safe online. Appropriate restrictions are now in place, and children receive regular, targeted work to help

them understand online risks and use the internet safely. As a result, children have better awareness of how to stay safe online.

Since the last inspection, safeguarding notifications have been reported in a timely manner. As a result, the previous requirement set has not been restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/10/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/03/2025	Full	Good
21/02/2024	Full	Good
14/12/2022	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 leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered manager should provide consistent oversight in the home to ensure that the children receive good-quality care. Systems in place to support children should be reviewed to ensure that they remain effective in meeting children's needs. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	5 April 2026

The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)(vii)(b)(d)(e)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that when safeguarding concerns arise, staff and managers take immediate action to prevent further harm. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	5 April 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	5 April 2026

that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;

that arrangements are in place to—

ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;

manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and

plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority;

that each child's relevant plans are followed.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c))

*This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1241023

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Treehouse Educare Limited

Registered provider address: New Barn School, Guildford Road, Broadbridge Heath, Horsham, West Sussex RH12 3PQ

Responsible individual: Kathleen Dodd

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Chido Mangava, Social Care Inspector
Hannah Cox, Social Care Inspector

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