

1250253

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides short break services for up to 4 children with physical and/or learning disabilities. The service offers respite stays and shared care arrangements.

At the time of the inspection, there were 35 children using the service. One child has a shared care arrangement, and the other children attend for short breaks.

The manager registered in January 2025.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 June 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2026

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2026	Full	Inadequate
16/07/2024	Full	Good
13/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

At the time of inspection, 35 children were being supported at this short break home. Since the last inspection, improvements have been made. However, several shortfalls remain which have led to a judgement of requires improvement to be good. Although children have some good experiences when they come to stay, there are still shortfalls in leadership and management and the help and protection of children. Several of these shortfalls have been raised previously and continue without being addressed.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The shortfalls identified in the help and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home limit the overall judgement. This is despite children having some good experiences when they visit the home.

At the time of the inspection, 3 children were staying at the home for a one-night short break over the 2 days. All 6 children were seen as part of this inspection.

Children do not have access to all areas of the home. Several doors are kept locked, including locks on children's wardrobes and cupboards. This restricts children from being able to access their personal belongings. The rationale for the restrictions and if these continue to be necessary for each child are not available. Children have a play area in a cabin outside. However, the back door and door to this cabin remain locked. This does not help children who have communications needs to express how they access their home. Bedroom windows do not have window restrictors in place to help keep children safe. This means that windows are kept locked, restricting the flow of fresh air in children's bedrooms.

Staff have started to help children to spend more time in the community. However, the majority of activities still take place at the home. Some children rarely spend time in the community with each other and staff. This means that children miss out on new experiences and social opportunities that help them to be part of their local community.

The home is decorated with child-friendly murals. Children can access different communication aids located on some of the walls. There is a variety of sensory play equipment in the garden. Some repairs have been made since the last inspection. However, there are areas that require further improvement as well as general garden maintenance.

Children's short breaks are planned to ensure that they stay with other children they get along with well. The home is often a settled and calm environment, which contributes to children enjoying their stays.

Some children have made progress in relation to their individual targets. For example, children are encouraged to try new foods, and as a result, some children enjoy a wider range of tastes and flavours. Staff have supported some children with independence tasks that they could not previously manage. This helps children to practise new skills and build their confidence.

Staff know the children well and speak warmly about them, and they want children to have good experiences when they visit the home. Children develop trusting relationships with staff, who enjoy spending time with the children and understand their needs well.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers do not hold consistent or up-to-date records for children, including their care plans. Children's plans do not reflect the most relevant information about children or how to care for them. This does not help staff to provide consistently good care to children informed by their local authority plans.

Some children are monitored using a non-recording camera in their bedroom. Although parents sign generic consent forms about monitoring, this is not individualised to each child. From children's records it is unclear if social workers are aware of this video monitoring. Children's risk assessments do not detail why the monitoring is in place, therefore staff do not have clear direction about how this monitoring should be used to support children's safety and privacy. Pictures used to communicate the monitoring to children are not at an accessible level for children to see or understand.

Staff recruitment records do not include all relevant checks. Leaders and managers have not made attempts to explore all relevant references. In addition, it is not clear if originals of important identity documents were seen by the manager to assure their recruitment checks are suitable. Overall, records do not support good safer recruitment practice.

Children are rarely physically held. Staff have training on a particular model of restraint. However, not all staff are clear on what this model is. On one occasion, a child was supported to move back to the car. The record of this incident is not clear or detailed enough to help leaders and managers consider if this should have been recorded as a physical intervention. This does not help leaders and managers to understand use of physical intervention or other support techniques.

Incidents are infrequent. Often staff use de-escalation skills to help children and distract them from behaviour that might hurt themselves or others. However, staff are not consistently talking with children following any incidents to understand the children's wishes and feelings. This does not help children to learn from behaviour or ensure their views can be heard.

Children have not been missing from the home. Leaders and managers have updated children's plans to give staff better information about how they should respond if children were to go missing. This helps to keep children safer.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is managed by a registered manager and deputy manager, who want children to have good experiences when they come to visit the home. At the last full inspection, there were several significant shortfalls which addressed how children's needs were not safely being met. Leaders and managers have taken steps to improve the service, but there is still work to be done.

There are several shortfalls and practice issues which have been raised at previous inspections. Leaders and managers are not consistently supporting staff to improve practice and have not addressed requirements or recommendations from previous inspections to make sustained improvements. Gaps in leadership and management oversight continue, which do not support effective change.

Leaders and managers do not yet have effective oversight of monitoring the children's experiences at the home. Leaders and managers are not yet keeping up-to-date records for all children. Several children do not have current plans from the local authority, which would help guide leaders and managers and staff in effective care plans for children. Leaders and managers do not attend meetings about children regularly, which does not help them to understand the changes in children's lives to plan their care effectively.

Staff receive supervision sessions every 3 months, in line with the home's policy. However, this policy means that staff who are working full time could see over 30 children several times and not speak about their care or needs. Supervision records do not routinely talk about children in detail, explore any staff practice issues or discuss any safeguarding concerns. This does not help leaders and managers to understand staff practice or their required learning and development needs.

Staff are offered a variety of training. Leaders and managers have updated how they track and monitor training to better capture staff's skills and experiences. Most staff are suitably qualified and have the relevant qualification. However, leaders and managers have not effectively monitored a staff member who is out of timescale to achieve the relevant qualification.

Parents generally share positive feedback about their children's experiences at the home. However, some parents noted that clearer communication would help them better support their children. Social workers were happy with the care children received when they came for short breaks.

One requirement is restated. Several more recommendations have been raised which were raised in previous inspections.

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 is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and 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)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	30 September 2026
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;	1 July 2026

the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))	
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— protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; 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)(ii)(iv)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, ensure that any restriction on children's access to their belongings is proportionate, individually risk assessed and regularly reviewed, and any restriction on children's access to areas of the home, such as cupboards in their bedrooms, is proportionate, individually assessed and regularly reviewed. Any window restrictions must be kept to the minimum necessary while ensuring children still have access to fresh air.	31 July 2026

The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v)) In particular, ensure that staff speak to children about their behaviour and support them in a way they understand to identify strategies they can use to reduce incidents.	30 September 2026
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))	30 September 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure records of restraint are kept and enable the registered person and staff to review the use any control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it

meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

- The registered person should ensure that children with disabilities are supported to participate in leisure or cultural activities in the community. The registered person, in conjunction with any relevant person (such as a parent or school) should assess what would be safe, achievable and reasonable for each child, in line with their relevant plans, and ensure appropriate opportunities are available for each child to have fun, form friendships and enjoy life, relative to their stage of development and individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.10)
- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of children. In particular, ensure that the garden is well maintained and provides a welcoming environment for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all reasonable efforts are made for staff in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, to achieve the qualification in Regulation 32 (4) within the relevant time frame. Any delays should be clearly documented. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)
- The registered person should ensure there are systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 1250253

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Achieving Aspirations Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: 16 Broad Street, Eye IP23 7AF

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Catrina Woolnough

Inspectors

Rebecca Hannell, Social Care Inspector

Anda Roddy, Social Care Inspector

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