

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 31 children using the service. One child has a shared care arrangement, while the other children attend for short breaks.

The manager registered in January 2025.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 16 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2024	Full	Good
13/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/12/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

There are several serious shortfalls in the help and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. Combined, these shortfalls have resulted in an inadequate judgement.

At the time of the inspection, 4 children were staying at the home for short breaks. All 4 children contributed to this inspection.

Children are not always offered a wide range of activities. Most of the activities take place at the home and some of the children rarely spend time in the community. This means that children may miss out on new experiences and social opportunities.

Children do not have access to all appropriate areas of the home. All the children have cupboards in their bedrooms, however, these are locked. These cupboards contain bedding and the children's personal belongings. There is no clear rationale why these are locked. Additionally, bedroom windows are kept locked, restricting the flow of fresh air in the bedrooms.

Children's views are not routinely sought after incidents. Following the majority of incidents, children are not consulted with or spoken to about their behaviour, to help them to understand any concerns. This does not support children to develop positive behaviour, or staff to understand children's views.

Children's breaks at the home are well planned to ensure that they are able to stay with other children they get along with well. This helps to ensure that, overall, the home is a settled and calm environment which contributes to children enjoying their stays.

Some children have made progress in relation to their individual targets. Children are supported and encouraged to try new foods and, as a result, some children enjoy a wider range of tastes and flavours.

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

Staff have not always taken prompt action in relation to safeguarding concerns. On one occasion, a member of staff raised safeguarding concerns with 2 senior members of staff. These staff did not inform the registered manager for another 2 days. As a result, the member of staff subject to the concerns continued to work at the home over the weekend with no additional safeguarding measures in place.

Staff have not always sought prompt medical attention for children when necessary. On one occasion, there was a 2-hour delay in seeking emergency medical attention for a child who was having a potential seizure. Advice was initially sought from an epilepsy trainer before medical advice was then sought.

Children's relevant plans do not provide guidance for staff on actions to take if children go missing from the home. The missing-from-home policy is not appropriate for this home. While no children have gone missing since the last inspection, if followed, the currently policy would leave children at risk of significant harm.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that fire safety arrangements keep children and staff safe. Fire doors are routinely propped open, preventing them from closing in the event of a fire. One fire door needs to be repaired to comply with fire safety standards.

Leaders and managers have not ensured safe medication storage. Keys to the medication storage cabinet remained in the lock of the cabinet during the inspection day. The manager was made aware of this at the start of the day, however, did not take action to ensure that the cabinet was securely locked.

On one occasion, a member of staff inappropriately restrained a child. A record of this restraint was not made. An investigation was carried out in relation to this restraint, however, the views of the child involved were not sought. There has been one recorded restraint since the last inspection. Staff were not spoken to individually about this restraint. This does not allow staff to individually reflect on the incident or provide a safeguarding culture where staff can raise concerns in private.

Parents are consistently positive about the impact that children's short breaks have had on their family life. Parents said that their children were safe and happy and enjoyed their short breaks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have failed to identify the serious shortfalls raised at this inspection. Several of the shortfalls raised at the last inspection have been re-raised. Whilst there has been progress to address some of these shortfalls, additional shortfalls relating to the same requirements were also identified.

Leaders and managers undertook an investigation into staff practice following concerns raised by a member of staff. This investigation failed to identify that 2 members of senior staff had not taken effective action in relation to safeguarding concerns.

Leaders and managers failed to identify the shortfall in seeking prompt medical attention. This meant that there was no action taken to prevent recurrence or additional learning put in place to improve future practice.

The review of the children's stays and the experiences offered is limited. Some feedback is obtained from children, staff and parents, however, there is no evidence of how this feedback is used to develop and improve the care provided.

Leaders and managers have begun implementing new systems to monitor children's activities out of the home and to provide management analysis of incidents involving

children. This has the potential to aid monitoring and review processes to improve the quality of care.

The planning before children stay at the home is meticulous. The manager undertakes a comprehensive assessment of the staff's ability to meet children's needs. This includes visits and overnight stays for children. This helps to ensure that the staff can meet the needs of all children that they care for.

External professionals said that communication with the staff and managers has improved and that they are happy with the care offered to children. One spoke about the progress that their child had made with eating a wider variety of food.

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— 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(g)(ii)(h)) In particular: Leaders and managers must use monitoring and review processes to identify any concerns about staff practice. These systems must include oversight of all incidents in the home. This oversight must identify lessons to be learned to improve practice to keep children safe. Leaders and managers must evaluate how the quality of care provided is affecting children's experiences and progress. This includes implementing systems to regularly assess and review the impact of care practices, using feedback from children, staff and external professionals.	13 April 2026

*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.

13 April 2026

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;

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare

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.

(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))

In particular:

Leaders and managers must ensure that all staff are aware of, and act in accordance with, the home's safeguarding policy, including raising and escalating safeguarding concerns without delay.

Leaders and managers must ensure that all staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to seeking medical attention for children, including when it is necessary to seek immediate emergency medical attention.

Leaders and managers must ensure that fire doors are not prevented from shutting in the event of a fire.

Leaders and managers must ensure that routine checks of fire doors identify when repairs are required, and that any repairs are carried out promptly.

Leaders and managers must ensure that medications are stored securely and that staff are aware of their responsibilities in relation to the secure storage of medication.

Leaders and managers must ensure that children's relevant plans guide staff on what action to take if a child is missing from home. Actions should be assessed based on the individual needs of each child.	
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; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; and 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)(iv)(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. This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	13 April 2026
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills.	13 April 2026

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child’s interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child’s interests and preferences. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is restated.	
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: 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.	13 April 2026

Any restrictions on windows are as least restrictive as possible and allow for children to have fresh air.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, ensure: Records are written in relation to any incident of restraint.	13 April 2026

Staff are given the opportunity to reflect individually on any use of restraint.	
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*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: 80 Compair Crescent, Ipswich, Suffolk IP2 0EH

Responsible individual: Anna Boulton

Registered manager: Catrina Woolnough

Inspector

Andrea Bounden, Social Care Inspector

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