

1270744

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and support for up to five children with learning disabilities. The children may have a diagnosis of autism and may have experienced significant early childhood trauma.

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

The home is co-located with part of the organisation's school. Only the social care provision was inspected.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2025.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 November 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/12/2023	Full	Good
01/02/2023	Full	Good
01/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The new leadership team at the home has made significant and positive changes since the last full inspection. As a result, children are making encouraging progress in many areas, including social and independence skills, behaviour and education.

The registered manager has championed the introduction of well-established models of therapeutic support for children. Staff are increasingly well equipped to support behaviour through these therapeutic approaches. They ensure that these principles are embedded in daily practice and contribute to a positive trajectory for children. The coordinator for the therapeutic programme is highly respected. Staff consistently reference the positive impact of her work on both children's development and their own professional confidence.

Staff form strong relationships with families, which helps to support the consistency of care for children. Staff work very closely and collaboratively across teams, both internally and externally with other health and social care professionals. In one example, a child was facing a move to more secure accommodation, as their behaviours were highly complex. However, strong partnership work enabled all professionals to form a coherent and successful plan to stabilise the placement, and the child remains at the home and is making positive progress.

Health support is proactive and coordinated. Staff advocate effectively for children's needs, ensuring that medical requirements are met with sensitivity and competence.

The head of residential services has ensured that admission planning has been enhanced, resulting in more informed decisions about children who come to the home. For one new child, planning and evaluation were of a high quality, and the success of the transition to date reflects the effectiveness of the detailed preparation and support.

Staff ensure that children engage well with school. Staff and education providers work in tandem to ensure continuity and responsiveness to children's learning needs.

Children's voices are heard and valued. Regular meetings provide a platform for children to influence their environment. In one example, staff supported a child in making choices about sleeping arrangements, helping him move from sleeping on the floor to his bed.

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

Children in the home require high levels of support, with two-to-one staffing ratios in place. This significantly reduces the risk of children going missing, and no such incidents have been reported during this inspection period.

Staff's safeguarding knowledge is strong. Staff are clear on reporting procedures and confident in escalating concerns externally if needed.

When children make allegations, staff follow organisational protocols closely to ensure that all incidents are managed effectively. Staff communicate appropriately with safeguarding professionals and Ofsted, when necessary.

The number of reported physical restraints is high, but this reflects the complexity of children's needs and the home's rigorous reporting culture. Even minimal physical guidance is recorded, which inflates figures but demonstrates transparency. The manager's recent review of restrictive physical interventions (RPIs) revealed inconsistencies in reporting systems, particularly around frequency and categorisation. Despite data challenges, reviews confirmed that RPIs are used appropriately and only as a last resort. Staff prioritise de-escalation and demonstrate a clear understanding of when intervention is necessary to prevent harm.

Debriefs and follow-up work are well documented, and interventions are proportionate. There is no evidence of misuse or over-reliance on physical intervention. However, descriptions and tracking of incidents are not always clear, which reduces the manager's opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of behaviour support strategies. This remains an area for close monitoring, but inspectors were reassured by the openness of the provider and the improving picture overall.

Self-harm is not a prevalent concern, but staff are trained and prepared to respond appropriately should incidents occur.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new service manager brings energy and an ambitious vision for improvement. Her analytical approach to behaviour support and incident reporting has enabled the identification of themes and trends, which, in turn, has informed practice development.

Staff morale is high. There is a shared commitment to therapeutic care, and staff feel well supported in managing complex behaviours. Children are showing signs of reduced distress and improved engagement.

The manager recognises the work still to be done in enhancing staff's skills and knowledge. She benefits from dedicated support from a capable senior team. Conversations with staff reflect alignment with leadership goals and confidence in the manager's direction. Staff speak passionately about the children and demonstrate a deep understanding of their needs and aspirations.

Training and supervision are praised, particularly by newer staff, who feel well prepared and supported. Support following incidents is robust. Staff are provided time to reflect and learn, and induction processes ensure that new team members are not rushed into behaviour support roles prematurely.

Children benefit from a stable and enthusiastic core team. Staffing levels are appropriate to meet the needs of the cohort, and supervision systems are effective in maintaining resilience and reflective practice.

Children's views are actively sought and respected. Staff facilitate regular meetings and discussions with the children to enable them to express any concerns and to influence decisions about daily life at the home, including menus and activities.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make the best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. In particular, the registered person should ensure the accuracy of data produced around incidents and restraints to reliably identify the impact of changes to staff practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 1270744

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HeadStart Residential Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 30 to 34 North Street, Hailsham BN27 1DW

Responsible individual: Scott Fasciolo-Barnes

Registered manager: Alexis Reilly

Inspectors

Peter Jackson, Social Care Inspector

Alexia Hosker, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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