

1273485

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by Birmingham Children's Trust and provides short breaks for up to seven children with learning disabilities.

A new registered manager has been appointed since the last inspection. They are suitably experienced and hold a management qualification at level 5.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2025

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2023	Full	Good
17/08/2022	Full	Good
07/09/2021	Full	Good
27/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home was not operating at the time of this inspection. Since the last full inspection, 17 children have used the service, and the last child left the service in December 2024. The provider is currently applying to vary the home's registration conditions, and all children have now been transferred to receive short breaks elsewhere.

Well-planned introductions take place before children begin using the service. Discussions take place with children's parents and social workers to ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of children's needs. Children and parents have several visits to the home as part of the planning, and the visits progress at a pace that suits each child's needs. Staff supported one child who struggled to settle with additional tea visits until they were ready to stay overnight.

Children enjoy a range of activities and experiences during their short breaks. Activities are based on children's preferences and are assessed to ensure that they are safe. Children have enjoyed visits to the park and local shops, as well as sensory activities, playing in the garden, and listening to their favourite music. These activities promote children's social and emotional development and help ensure that they enjoy their short breaks.

Staff have the skills and receive training to understand children's various means of communication. Staff encourage children to choose their meals and snacks, and children frequently express their preferences to staff when they are unable to communicate verbally. Records sometimes fail to show how children are supported in expressing their views, and evidence of meaningful consultation could be improved.

Staff support children in understanding how to raise complaints. On one occasion, staff advocated for a child by making a complaint on their behalf when they were unable to do so themselves. The complaint was investigated and resolved, and the child was informed of the outcome through their preferred communication method. This helps children to challenge decisions, even when they are unable to do so independently.

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

Clear plans are in place to manage risk. One child was at high risk of absconding; therefore, a clear plan was put in place to determine which activities were safe and what level of support the child needed while in the community. When the child attempted to abscond, staff intervened by using physical intervention, which was the most appropriate and proportionate response.

Staff manage self-injurious behaviour effectively. There is good communication with schools and children's families to keep everyone informed of any injuries that have

occurred. While children receive the support they need, accident records do not always specify whether medical attention was required or provided.

Children's medication is well managed. Before children arrive for their stay, medication is discussed with their parents so that any discrepancies can be addressed. Staff who administer medication have received appropriate training. On one occasion, a child was able to access a staff member's medication due to a lack of supervision and processes not being followed. The manager took appropriate action to address the concerns; however, important discussions and decisions were not recorded. The medication did not cause the child any harm.

Staff recruitment is not always carried out safely. One of two files reviewed revealed a large gap in a staff member's employment history that had not been explored, and neither file provided any evidence of attempts to verify the reasons why staff have left previous positions of trust. The manager lacks understanding of these necessary checks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a change of manager since the last inspection. The home is now overseen by a suitably experienced and qualified manager. Over the last year, the responsible individual has changed several times, and there have been some delays in sending the information to Ofsted. The relevant application has recently been submitted.

Managers and staff recognise the value of working collaboratively. There is clear communication between the home, schools, social workers and parents to ensure that everyone is up to date with changes regarding the child. For example, when one child had a seizure during a stay, parents were quickly informed, and school staff were notified the following day so that they could continue to monitor the child.

Communication with parents is good. Parents gave positive feedback about the short-break service. They value the care and experiences that their child receives while away, as well as the break that it gives the family from their caring role. Some parents have expressed frustration regarding the home's rules around medication, but they understand that they are in place to keep their child safe when away from home. Parents were consulted about the changes to the service and supported to be part of the transition to the new home.

Staff receive effective support. They attend regular practice reflection sessions during which they discuss children's needs in detail. They also receive regular supervision, which helps them to reflect on their practice. However, records of the meetings do not always include enough detail about important discussions following incidents.

Managers have failed to ensure that a workforce development plan is in place that outlines expectations for staff training, supervision and performance management. This shortfall was identified at the last inspection, but due to a lack of understanding of the regulations, sufficient action has not been taken to rectify it.

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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This specifically relates to ensuring that staff have a full employment history and that any gaps are thoroughly explored. It also relates to ensuring that reasonable steps are taken to verify the reason for staff leaving any past employment in a caring role.	1 May 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan that is updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff, including the home's manager. This recommendation is repeated. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date and that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. This specifically relates to ensuring that records relating to children's accidents, staff supervision sessions, and children's views are sufficiently detailed. It also relates to ensuring that important discussions and decisions are recorded for future reference. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1273485

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: 1 Avenue Road, Aston, Birmingham B6 4DU

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Baljinder Khera

Inspector

Vicky Smith, 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 looked after children, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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