

2529331

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to five children with learning disabilities and social communication difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there were four children living in the home.

The home has not had a registered manager since 1 August 2025.

The inspection started on 23 September 2025. The inspector returned on 29 September 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 September and 29 September 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: 22 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2025	Full	Good
17/05/2023	Full	Good
10/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/10/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress in this home because they are supported by a caring and understanding staff team. Children have made progress around their speech, physical coordination and independence. Children are happy and comfortable around the staff and experience warm interactions from them. Families are positive about the care their children receive. One parent described staff as attentive and nurturing.

Staff know the children well and can meet their needs. For example, when one child needed a haircut but struggled to tolerate this experience, staff found a hairdresser with specialist experience to support with this. The hairdresser was able to come to the home and build a relationship with the child before cutting their hair. The child is now able to have their hair cut regularly without distress.

Staff promote education, and all children attend school. Children are supported by staff to travel to school, and as a result, children have good educational attainment and attendance. One child who was below their education targets last year is now on target for all subjects and is above target in maths. Staff ensure that actions set in meetings about the children's education are also supported at home. This provides consistency and continuity of care for the children.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met. All children are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and are up to date with medical appointments. Staff advocate for children around their health needs and work with medical professionals to promote children's health and well-being.

Staff help the children to take part in activities both in and away from the home. Staff ensure the children's complex needs are not a barrier to their experiences. Children have visited a local science museum, splash parks and theme parks. Children help with cooking meals and going food shopping to support their independence. Staff understand the importance of peer interactions and children having social networks. Staff have explored youth groups and clubs for children to promote friendships outside of the home.

The home is clean and tidy. However, some areas of the home are looking worn and tired. Staff ensure that children have access to books, toys and games. Children's routines are on display so children understand what will be happening each day. Children can personalise their bedrooms; however, one child's room has drawings on the wall and some furniture damage that has not been addressed.

The staff generally support children to understand positive behaviour and reward good choices. However, on occasion, consequences have not been used proportionately or in ways to help children understand the effect of their behaviour.

Staff have used consequences in place of restorative work, and some consequences have been punitive in nature.

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

Senior leaders promptly investigate safeguarding concerns. Investigations are thorough, and children are kept informed of the process. Findings are shared with external professionals and families. Learning from safeguarding concerns is implemented into practice.

The staff are attentive to the children's health and well-being. When children injure themselves through play or self-injury, staff take appropriate action to seek medical advice. Because the children have communication needs, staff keep regular records of any marks or bruising on the children to monitor for concerns. Staff ensure that all the children's health appointments are up to date.

Staff understand children's needs and vulnerabilities and demonstrate their knowledge of how to keep children safe. Risk assessments and behaviour plans for children are detailed. Although the children's plans are regularly updated, one child's plan has not been updated for a significant period. This does not reflect learning from recent incidents or detail new risks for new or temporary staff to be aware of. This has not affected the safety or well-being of the children.

Although staff have completed safeguarding training, some staff are not fully aware of safeguarding procedures. The manager has plans to address these gaps in staff knowledge and ensure training for staff equips them for the role. These gaps in knowledge have not affected the staff's decision-making around safeguarding for the children.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort to keep children safe. Children are supported to express their emotions more positively, and as a result, there has been a decrease in incidents involving staff. However, debriefs with children and staff after incidents of physical intervention are not always completed. These are missed opportunities for children and staff to reflect on incidents and how they felt about what had happened. Managers' reviews of incidents do not always scrutinise practice and identify lessons learned to inform future practice.

The children live in a safe home environment. Managers promptly address any health and safety concerns that arise. Health and safety inspections and fire inspections are undertaken by external providers to provide additional scrutiny of health and safety practice.

Leaders and managers ensure that safer recruitment processes are followed. All appropriate checks of candidates take place before an offer of employment. This ensures that individuals applying for roles within the team are safe to work with vulnerable children. Leaders and managers are actively recruiting to fill staff vacancies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home does not have a registered manager. However, senior leaders are actively recruiting to fill the position. In the interim, the deputy manager is carrying out the manager's role and is being supported by the responsible individual. The manager also receives peer support from the manager and deputy from the organisation's sister home. This support is helping the manager to increase her knowledge of the role.

The manager knows the children well and has good relationships with them. She can demonstrate her knowledge of children's progress and the targets set for children where progress could be further improved. The manager speaks warmly about the children and is committed to them achieving positive outcomes.

Leaders promote development opportunities for staff, including newly created leadership roles. The implementation of new roles allows staff to take more accountability of the running of the home. These changes support staff's knowledge and confidence when working with the children. Newer members of staff are positive of the levels of the support they receive being new to their roles. Staff receive good inductions, which include undertaking mandatory training and shadowing experienced staff.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff benefit from regular team meetings. This time is used effectively to discuss the progress of the children and development of the staff team. Team members can have their views heard and suggest ideas during these meetings. The staff are supportive of each other and of the home manager. Staff receive annual appraisals and ongoing regular reviews of the targets set.

Feedback from professionals is mixed. Some professionals highlight the progress children make and the care they receive from staff. Some professionals highlighted their concerns around communication and information-sharing from the staff. In response, the manager and senior leaders met with external professionals to agree a consistent way of communicating. As a result, there is now a clear plan in place around communication to ensure important information around the safeguarding of children is appropriately shared.

Supervision for staff is variable in frequency and quality. Some staff have not had supervision at the frequency set by the workforce plan, with some staff not having supervision for three months. Supervision notes are not fully reflective of the discussions held during the session. Agency staff who provide care for the children regularly in the home do not receive supervision. This is a missed opportunity to support agency staff and gain valuable feedback from individuals working closely with the children.

The manager has oversight of the home and is aware there are some areas of improvement. As a result, an action plan has been created to address these

concerns. However, a number of shortfalls have not been identified and therefore not addressed. The manager has acknowledged that the action plan needs to be strengthened to ensure all shortfalls can be rectified.

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 ensure that— 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)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	10 November 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that supervision of staff is undertaken within the organisation's timeframe and that supervision notes reflect the conversations had during the supervision. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that regular temporary staff receive regular supervision.	10 November 2025
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.	10 November 2025

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that oversight of incidents includes analysis of the incident and ways of working that could prevent a reoccurrence.

In particular, the registered person must ensure that action plans to develop the service highlight all shortfalls and how these are to be addressed.

Additionally, the registered person must ensure that knowledge gained from training is embedded into staff's practice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any consequences used in the home are restorative and help children to understand natural consequences. The registered person should consistently review the effectiveness of the measures being taken. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- The registered person should ensure that children's case records detailed in Regulations 35-39 are kept up to date while they remain in the home. In particular, the manager must ensure that all records, including risk assessments and support plans, are updated with relevant information that is consistent and guides staff to deliver effective care and support for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the home is a well-maintained environment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2529331

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 4, Northbrook Industrial Estate, Hollybrook Road, Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 6PB

Responsible individual: Christopher Newman

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Webling, 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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