

2591688

Registered provider: Mutual Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to provide care for 2 children. At the time of the inspection, 2 children were living in the home. The inspector spent time with each child.

There is a new manager in post. They have applied to register with Ofsted. The previous registered manager is the new proposed responsible individual. Both were present for the inspection. The operations manager was present for feedback about the inspection findings.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 May 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: 1 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/07/2025	Full	Good
01/10/2024	Full	Good
25/04/2023	Full	Good
02/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

Some areas of children's needs are not met effectively. Shortfalls identified in children's care and support, and management oversight systems, limit children's overall progress. Some known vulnerabilities affecting children have not consistently reduced over time.

Staff interactions with children reflect emotional warmth and fun. Feedback from children indicates that they have developed positive relationships with staff and a sense of belonging within their home environment.

Where appropriate, managers and staff advocate for children and support them to spend time with their family and friends. This has contributed to a reduction in missing from home incidents.

Inspection judgements

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

Children have experienced stability in their care arrangements. They have lived in the home for almost 2 years. However, managers have identified that the current care arrangements are not sufficiently meeting the needs of one child for them to make progress. Prior to the inspection, managers had given notice to the child's placing authority to end their care arrangements.

When care and support strategies do not achieve the intended outcome, managers and staff do not sufficiently review plans to adapt strategies that are necessary to drive children's progress. For example, important targets, such as improving children's oral hygiene and school attendance, have not been achieved over a lengthy period. Additionally, children are not always provided with opportunities to actively contribute to their support plan records to fully understand the targets set for them.

Children's attendance at their education provisions has declined. One child is currently not attending their education provision, and staff do not consistently engage them with structured educational activities during the school day. While managers have advocated for one child to have increased time at an education provision, their overall attendance level is very low, and their educational attainment remains below expectations.

Staff engage children to develop their independence skills, including practical life skills, such as baking, cooking and to use public transport independently. Children also describe positive experiences and activities that they have participated in, including go-karting, bowling and a recent holiday enjoyed with staff members.

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

Managers' and staff's inconsistent approach to children's care and support limits the effectiveness of interventions to help children to make sustained and timely progress. This includes supporting children to establish and maintain healthy routines and to ensure that their use of the internet is safe and appropriate. While concerns relating to substance misuse have recently reduced, these issues have persisted over a prolonged period.

At times, children do not always receive effective help to manage their behaviour with appropriate boundaries. Incident records show that conflict management strategies do not always resolve situations effectively and, on occasion, police intervention is requested to resolve situations in the home. The decision to search children's bedrooms are recorded, including the reasons for the search.

Managers have proactively contributed to care planning for one child to spend time with their family and friends safely. This has directly contributed to a reduction in the frequency of them going missing from the home. Staff take appropriate action and look for children when they are missing.

Children identify trusted staff members that they can talk to about concerns. They feel listened to and know how to complain. They are responded to, to understand the outcome of any complaint about their care and experiences.

Managers and staff demonstrate understanding of each child's needs and the risks posed to them. Staff talk to children openly about important issues that affect their lives. When concerns escalate, appropriate information is shared with children's placing authorities. Where appropriate, children's family members are made aware of incidents.

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

Leadership and management of the home require further development to ensure that practice and oversight lead to progress for children. Management oversight systems to monitor, review and evaluate the overall quality of care and children's progress are not comprehensive. This limits opportunities to drive continuous improvement in the care delivered to children, and to ensure that vulnerabilities are addressed promptly and effectively.

There is a new manager in post. They have applied to register with Ofsted promptly. Changes in the management arrangements of the home have caused minimal disruption to the children, as the new manager has worked in the home previously. They have a developing understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development.

The home is staffed to meet the needs of children. Staff recruitment procedures are in place to reduce the risk of unsuitable persons working in the home. Generally, staff

receive training to respond to children's specific needs, and they benefit from regular supervision sessions that are recorded effectively.

The home is furnished to meet the children's needs. Following incidents, damage that poses a hazard to children is repaired promptly. In some parts of the home, minor areas of damage, and wear and tear, have not been repaired promptly. This detracts from a nurturing home environment. Furthermore, a door alarm agreed to keep children safe at night is not working.

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, 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(v)(viii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff provide consistent boundaries that improve children's attendance at school or engage them in educational learning when they do not attend school.	26 June 2026
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to—	26 June 2026

achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff provide children with the support they need to establish and maintain healthy routines, including sleep and oral hygiene.	
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)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are equipped with the necessary skills to deliver interventions that reduce all known vulnerabilities effectively. The registered person must review and implement alternative care approaches if children are not making progress within designated timescales.	26 June 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home provides a homely, nurturing and supportive environment that meet the needs of children. Damage and signs of wear and tear in the home environment should be repaired without delay. ('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: 2591688

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Mutual Care Limited

Registered provider address: Grafton Lodge, Battery Lane, Portishead, Bristol BS20 7JD

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Louise Bacon, Social Care Inspector

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