

2608630

Registered provider: City of York

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides short-break stays for up to 8 children with physical disabilities and learning disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, 5 were children using the short-breaks service. All 5 children were observed or spoken with.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2023.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 January 2026

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: 11 November 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
11/11/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/03/2024	Full	Good
21/06/2022	Full	Good
02/03/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children access this short-breaks home for varying amounts of nights. Despite only being at the home for a finite amount of time, some children have made notable and applaudable progress. The very cornerstone of this is the excellent relationships between children and staff, who are passionate about the care they provide. A significant number of staff have worked at the home for over 10 years.

Children are fully supported with their learning by staff. When children struggle with attending one of the main school settings, staff make allowances so children can flexibly access their education within the home. Staff manage transitions from the home to the school comfortably and with ease. Staff make this change in environment enjoyable, so children are well prepared, and go to school in a positive mindset and in a happy mood.

Children are provided with a range of activities both in and out of the home. Activities are tailored to each child's likes and to meet their needs. Staff overcome barriers to providing children with activities they enjoy, such as identifying a suitable horse-riding provider for a child who uses a wheelchair. Staff have excellent relationships with children's families. One child's mother said, 'I think the staff know and get to understand the children exceptionally well. If the home could do anything better, it would be that they had more staff so they could provide more services for more children and families.'

Children are provided with any suitable equipment or devices they require to meet their needs. One specialist bed is used to keep some children safer during the night. Some children who use this room also require a camera to monitor them due to their complex health needs. However, some children who use this room, do not require camera monitoring, yet the camera remains in the room. Staff ensure the camera is switched off but children using the room do not know this. This does not convey a clear message about privacy to children who do not require this additional safeguard.

The home is bright, modern, large and spacious. There are several communal areas and a large outside area for children to relax, play and explore. The building is shared with a social work team and a clinical team. This, coupled with the nature of services provided at the home mean that a clinical feeling pervades, making it difficult for staff to create a homely and nurturing environment. Funding has been granted to counteract the clinical feel, but this has not yet been implemented.

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

Staff are clear of their safeguarding responsibilities towards the children. Staff take their roles very seriously and respond effectively when any safeguarding issues arise. Staff escalate appropriately and involve relevant agencies when necessary. Staff receive appropriate training in how to keep children safer, with an acute focus on children with disabilities. Staff receive relevant and bespoke training about complex conditions and

both learning and physical disabilities. This better equips staff to effectively safeguard and meet children's ever-changing needs.

Staff benefit from an experienced in-house trainer who regularly provides staff with the relevant training to physically intervene with children safely. Staff are skilled at calming difficult and tense situations which is reflected in the very low number of holds applied by staff. When holds are used they are appropriate and proportionate with a full record made. The manager reviews these records to identify if reoccurrence can be avoided.

Staff understand the importance of effectively managing children's health needs which are often complex in nature. Staff receive extensive training on the safe administration of medication. Staff are also well supported to understand children's individual needs and how these can be met. Despite this, minor medication errors persist. However, the acting manager reviews all medication errors and responds appropriately. Discrepancies are reviewed, promptly addressed and additional support provided as required by staff.

Leaders and managers and staff respond promptly, effectively and appropriately to allegations and whistleblowing incidents. Appropriate referrals are made and appropriate responses to any incident are followed through in full. Relevant agencies including the regulator are kept informed and up to date until the matter reaches a satisfactory culmination. Children and their families are kept informed throughout.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An acting manager has been covering the registered manager post since May 2025. The registered manager is in the process of returning to work following their maternity leave. The acting manager has been proactive during her acting up period and has been well supported by senior staff. Staff are positive about the support they have received. Although the acting manager is very competent and has kept the home buoyant, she is looking forward to returning to her role of deputy manager.

The acting manager ensures that all staff receive supervision sessions from their supervisor according to organisational policy. Children are discussed in detail as well as staff's roles responsibilities, professional development and any personal issues. Annual appraisals are equally as detailed with an effective review of previous objectives with a focus on developing staff with a new, realistic and achievable development plan.

The acting manager carries out audits as one of several different monitoring and reviewing procedures in the home. Monitoring and oversight of the home is effective, and any identified shortfalls are responded to promptly with effective mitigation put in place.

Feedback about the standard and quality of care from both professionals and family members is excellent. One child's mother said, 'I am dreading when they [the staff] are no longer a part of our lives as they do so much for my child. All I have to say to each and every one of the staff is a heartfelt thank you.'

All external professionals and family members spoken with said that communication with the home is generally positive. However, areas for improvement were identified. Some professionals said that at times, staff response to requests for information could be more prompt. On occasion, appointments made and changes to meetings are not effectively communicated to staff and therefore go unnoticed. However, all those spoken with agreed that any communication around the children's needs or any safeguarding issues was done effectively and with vigour.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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— ensure that staff— treat each child with dignity and respect; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)(iv)(ix)(c)(i)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that monitoring equipment required to support some children with their complex health needs are only visible in the bedroom for these specific children when they are staying in the home.	10 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should provide a nurturing environment that is homely. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the home is decorated in a way that feels comfortable, welcoming, and homely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the skills and confidence to communicate easily and understand the importance of listening to, involving and responding to professionals, families and the children they care for. In particular, the registered person should ensure that information about the home or any children is effectively communicated in a timely way to all relevant people. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)

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: 2608630

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City Of York Council, West Offices, Station Rise, York YO1 6GA

Responsible individual: Michael Cavan

Registered manager: Stacey Woodcock

Inspectors

Deirdre Silkstone, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Ricky D'Arcy, Social Care Regulatory Inspection Manager

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