

2613032

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider. It provides care for up to 5 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities, alcohol misuse issues and mental health difficulties.

The registered manager's post is vacant.

At the time of this inspection, 4 children were living in the home. All the children were spoken with.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 April 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: 9 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/06/2025	Full	Good
15/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/01/2024	Full	Good
09/10/2023	Full	Inadequate

Summary of findings

Children have varying experiences in this home. Some children make progress while other children's needs are not always met. Home conditions are poor and routines are ineffective, limiting some children's progress. However, children trust the staff, and they are supported to maintain relationships with family and friends, increasing their sense of wellbeing and belonging.

Staff do not fully understand or manage children's risks, with inconsistent plans leaving children vulnerable to harm. Safeguarding responses are weak, with missed opportunities to intervene. Care is not always individualised; some practices are unnecessary and an invasion of children's privacy. Staff do not have meaningful conversations with children, which reduces their ability to stay safe.

There is no registered manager. Managers do not have oversight of the care delivered to the children, and as a result, shortfalls occur. However, there is a new manager in position, who has started to implement targeted changes with the aim of strengthening practice and achieving better outcomes for children.

Inspection judgements

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

Managers have not ensured that the home is maintained to an appropriate standard, leaving parts of the home environment run down and some children's furniture damaged. In one case, staff allowed a child to live in a bedroom with a dirty carpet and an unclean sofa. They have also installed plastic screens around televisions, and one child reports that these screens prevent them from using games consoles, which restricts normal recreational activities. In addition, leaders and managers have left unused ceiling-mounted cameras in place that need to be removed.

Children are not supported to maintain the development of their communication skills. One child requires specific resources to be used daily to develop their speech and language skills. Staff do not use these resources at home. As a result, staff limit the child's opportunities to build communication skills, which hinders their development and slows their overall progress.

The manager completes a compatibility assessment before a child moves into the home. These assessments do not fully consider each child's needs and risks or the behaviours that children may display when living together. As a result, leaders do not equip staff with the knowledge they need to assess and manage potential risks effectively. This shortfall limits the ability of staff to take appropriate preventative action and increases the likelihood of a negative impact on children's safety and wellbeing.

Leaders and staff work closely with relevant professionals to ensure that support meets children's individual needs. Two children attend education daily, and one child who previously struggled in their previous education setting now has a secure and more suitable learning arrangement. The child now engages in daily learning with a tutor who attends the home, and is making educational progress.

Staff actively build and maintain trust and meaningful relationships with children. Staff take the time to get to know them and respond sensitively, which helps children feel listened to and valued. As a result, children can clearly identify at least one trusted staff member they can approach for help. This relational practice promotes emotional security, encourages children to seek support when needed and contributes positively to their wellbeing.

Staff have the appropriate resources and practical arrangements to help children maintain meaningful relationships with the people who are important to them. They organise and provide children with technology and transport so that children can regularly speak to and spend time with family members and friends. This demonstrates a clear commitment to sustaining these significant connections. Through this approach, staff enable children to participate in a wide range of activities with their loved ones, which improves emotional bonds and promotes positive social experiences. As a result, children develop stronger interpersonal skills and a deeper sense of identity.

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

Staff do not consistently understand or respond effectively to children's risks and needs. Care plans and risk assessments lack clarity and consistency, leaving staff without clear guidance on the actions required to safeguard and support children. As a result, children remain vulnerable and exposed to potential harm.

Staff demonstrate limited professional curiosity, leading to missed opportunities to safeguard children. Risks linked to harmful associations are not fully recognised or addressed. For example, a child continues to have contact with an adult known to exploit children without effective intervention. Incidents of children going missing or leaving the home at night are not consistently reported or explored, reducing the ability to assess and manage risk. Furthermore, children returning to the home with illegal substances and unexplained money have not prompted sufficient intervention.

Staff do not consistently provide individualised care that reflects children's specific needs and rights. They regularly carry out room searches without clear rationale, resulting in practice that is unnecessarily intrusive. This compromises children's privacy and dignity. There have been occasions where staff do use room searches appropriately in specific safeguarding situations, such as when a child is missing from the home.

Meaningful and educative conversations about risk and personal safety are not always held with children. Children, therefore, do not develop the understanding, resilience and decision-making skills they need to recognise risks and keep themselves safe.

Staff use monetary consequences when children cause damage to property, but they do not review or record these measures to evaluate their effectiveness. As a result, the manager cannot assess if such consequences promote a change in behaviour.

Staff rarely need to use restraint practice. When it is required, it is to help children be safer. Staff recognise children's triggers when they are distressed and take steps to minimise the emotional upset children may experience. Following these incidents, children are encouraged to share their views in discussions with staff. This approach means that children can process, learn and gain an understanding of why the holds were used.

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

Managers do not have a clear oversight of the safety and quality of care provided to children. This means that concerns or patterns of behaviour are not identified as early as they could be. As a result, shortfalls in children's care develop, which has limited the children's overall experience and progress.

Since the last inspection, several staff have left the home and new staff have been employed. This period of change has weakened staff's understanding of the children's needs, risks and care. As a result, staff do not consistently deliver informed and cohesive care to children.

The language that staff use when speaking about children or recording information in their documents is unhelpful. Instead, some language places blame on children and fails to reflect an understanding of their experiences and needs. This stigmatising approach undermines children's dignity, negatively effects their emotional wellbeing and compromises the nurturing environment that children need.

Professionals speak highly of the new manager and staff in the home and described their relationships with children as warm and supportive. They say that staff work hard to help children settle into their new home. Professionals also note that children appear comfortable, relaxed and happy living in the home, and they observe positive interactions between staff and children. When children move on from the home, staff provide reassurance during periods of transition and uncertainty.

Staff described the new manager as 'supportive and approachable'. One staff member said that 'she has brought fresh ideas to the team' and described her as a 'breath of fresh air'. The manager has identified plans to develop the home and strengthen team practice, which demonstrates commitment to learning, improvement and positive change.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(vii)) This requirement is restated.	30 June 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.	30 June 2026

(Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that an assessment of children's compatibility includes all known risks between children and how these will be managed.	
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 the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and 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)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) This requirement is restated.	30 June 2026
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—	30 June 2026

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—

understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;

protect and promote each child's welfare;

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;

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)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(c)(i))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. The registered person should also consider the effectiveness of the measures. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('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: 2613032

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hennessy Living Group Limited

Registered provider address: Rickleton 1B, Bowes Offices, Lambton Park, Chester Le Street DH3 4AN

Responsible individual: Simon Duffy

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Laura Roberts, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Cat Makel, 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 2026