

2668789

Registered provider: Apsley Care Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. The home is registered to care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home.

There has been no registered manager since April 2025.

Inspection date: 12 February 2026

Date of last inspection: 4 August 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Staff know the child well and develop positive relationships. Where some staff have a stronger relationship with the child, they encourage and support relationships with other staff to strengthen them.

Online tutoring is provided for the child for 2 hours each day, and staff offer support to help them engage with this. However, the structure and routine available to the child are limited, which in turn restricts their opportunities to learn, develop and make educational progress. Managers and staff continue to work closely with other professionals to support the child's development, including planning for increased education provision to ensure their needs are met more effectively.

Staff support the child to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff and family planned a surprise meal out to celebrate the child's birthday. Recording of this is limited and does not reflect the experience for the child or whether any additional support was required.

The home environment requires some attention in relation to décor. The child's bedroom has recently been decorated. Staff do not consistently provide support to ensure bathroom areas are well maintained.

Individual risk assessments do not support staff to understand the specific help the child may require. They do not clearly outline the indicators that may show when the child is beginning to struggle with their emotions. Although risk assessments have recently been updated, they identify only some of the known risks and do not provide a comprehensive picture. Staff do not always follow risk assessments when supporting the child in the community, which increases the risk of harm. Following an incident, the associated records were confusing and contradictory, making it difficult to understand what had occurred or how risks had been managed. Managerial oversight is inconsistent and, as a result, does not always identify concerns about staff practice or the quality of recording.

There have been no complaints, allegations, missing-from-home episodes or physical interventions during this inspection period.

Managers are verbally reflective about their oversight of the care provided to the child and areas for continued professional development. This is not yet embedded into practice. Progress made by the child is not yet effectively monitored or evidenced by managers or staff. The child's social worker said, '[Child's name] continues to make great progress, and we continue to work with the home to achieve best outcomes.'

The quality and frequency of professional supervision sessions and team meetings are variable. The home has been without a registered manager since April 2025, and although interim managers have been in place, their differing approaches have created confusion for staff. The provider's responsible individual and a senior manager have been offering additional support during this period. However, reflective discussions are not promoted consistently, limiting opportunities for professional guidance and reducing the focus on developing and improving care practice. In addition, four members of staff have not completed the relevant qualification within the required timescale.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/08/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/09/2024	Full	Good
11/10/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that individual risk assessments are detailed and consider all known risks as well as the support the child requires. It also relates to ensuring that staff consistently follow these risk assessments.	9 April 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	9 April 2026

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; 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)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) In particular, the registered person must have effective oversight of the quality of care provided to children so they can identify areas of concern and respond with clear measurable actions. This includes recording in children’s records being accurate and detailed, reporting incidents and ensuring that language is child focused. This specifically relates to embedding monitoring systems, capturing children’s progress effectively and an ongoing review of their progress. The registered person must ensure that all staff have regular practice-related supervision and effective team meetings, where clear targets are set and reviewed.	
The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or	9 April 2026

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 has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b))	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must—	9 April 2026

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a))

Recommendations

- Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2668789

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Apsley Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 10 Valentine Place, Stanground South,
Peterborough PE2 8WG

Responsible individual: Abel Changa

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kathryn Hurley, Social Care Inspector

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