

2676045

Registered provider: HMO NE Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It offers care for up to 4 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties or have learning disabilities and sensory impairment.

At the time of this inspection, 3 children were living at the home. The inspector spoke with one child.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2022.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 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: 28 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/05/2025	Full	Good
29/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/11/2023	Full	Good
30/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Most children in the home are making progress from their individual starting points. However, not all children who have resided in the home have made progress. Similarly, not all children are helped to prepare for their moves from the home in planned ways, with some children moving on from the home with immediate effect. At times, staff have not been able to ensure the safety and wellbeing of all the children, and some children have been significantly affected by other children's behaviours. This has resulted in a significant increase in serious incidents and behaviours for children in the home. Overall, the care the children receive requires improvement to be good.

Inspection judgements

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

Most children living in the home currently are making some progress. However, other children who have moved on from the home have not made progress and have had to move in emergency and crisis situations. Children witnessing increased incidents in the home has had a detrimental impact on them and has led to some children saying that they have not felt safe.

The home is sparse in decoration. Some areas, including the garden and communal areas downstairs, require maintenance to ensure that they are safe and meet children's needs. The communal areas are not reflective of a family home environment that is welcoming for the children to spend their time in.

Some children spend most of their time in their bedrooms, not accessing education and employment. Staff encourage children to spend time with them. However, one child remains isolated in the home.

One child's bedroom has video surveillance in place, and the child is approaching puberty. Staff do not regularly review this measure to ensure the child's privacy and that it is used as a last resort. Furthermore, surveillance is not a recorded health need or supported by health professionals as being integral to the child's plan.

The registered manager and staff ensure that children with complex health needs receive the specialist care and support they require. Children are making progress in their hygiene and receive support to increase independence. The registered manager and staff understand children's needs and work hard to build positive relationships with them.

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

Since the last inspection, there has been a significant increase in missing-from-home episodes, the use of physical intervention, police callouts and several changes in children living in the home. This has been unsettling for children who have lived in the home for longer periods, as they have witnessed these incidents, including police coming to their home. In recent weeks, following some children moving on from the home, there has been a more settled period for the children in the home.

Some challenges experienced in the home have affected children's behaviours and feelings of safety. The registered manager and staff acknowledged the detrimental effect on the children and made the difficult decision to move children on from the home. However, not all children's experience of moving on was positive, and this has had to be done in emergency and crisis situations.

Children have not always been safeguarded or had support in place from staff to feel safe in the home. On one occasion, a child's safety was compromised when another child who was living in the home physically harmed them. Children have fractious relationships in the home, and several staff members have reported they believe the children are not always safe and that matching of children in the home has been ineffective.

There have been at least 2 occasions when serious incidents have not been notified to Ofsted, including incidents where children have been significantly affected. This prevents Ofsted from scrutinising information to ensure that children are safe.

When children make complaints, they do not always receive feedback or outcomes to help them understand what actions have been taken or that their complaints are taken seriously.

Physical interventions are used as a last resort, where appropriate, and are recorded clearly with management oversight and approval. When children go missing, staff actively search for them and know where they are likely to be. One professional said, 'Staff follow the protocol to the letter.'

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

There are several ongoing investigations in relation to inappropriate and unprofessional behaviours of staff. When staff have been subject to serious allegations, the provider has not carried out internal investigations to ensure that staff members remain suitable to continue working in the home.

Mixed feedback has been received from staff, with a significant number of staff saying they do not feel the home consistently meets children's needs. Additionally, some staff members say they do not feel supported by managers and leaders in the home.

Staff receive regular, reflective supervision sessions. However, the registered manager has a significant gap in her recorded supervision sessions for over 6 months. This was during the most challenging period in the home.

There has been a high level of agency staff use, including 30 different workers. The registered manager acknowledges this is a high number and has prioritised increasing the core staff team to provide more consistency of care.

A parent provided positive feedback about the care their child received. However, the parent said they experienced inconsistent communication, which caused them to worry about their child when they could not get in contact with staff or the registered manager to assure themselves of their child's safety and wellbeing.

When staff require specialist training to meet the individual health needs of a child, this is sourced and provided by the registered manager. She understands the skill sets of staff, with a focus on children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and this is reflected in the development plan for the home.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)(e)(f)(h))	1 August 2026
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i)(ii))	1 July 2026
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	1 August 2026

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(c)(iii)(iv))	1 August 2026
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character. (Regulation 31 (1) (2)(a) (3)(a))	1 August 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of medication. These are fundamentally the same sorts of arrangements as a good parent would make but are subject to additional safeguards. In particular, the manager should ensure that all staff are consistent with administering and recording medication in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to express any concerns about their care or other matters as soon as they arise. Children must be able to raise issues or complaints with support and without fear of any adverse consequences. The registered person must ensure that children receive a written outcome of their complaint. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)

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: 2676045

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HMO NE Ltd

Registered provider address: Hallgate House, 9 Grange Terrace, Sunderland SR2 7DF

Responsible individual: Angela Riddell

Registered manager: Cerys Howard

Inspector

Dawn McCluskey, 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