

2679574

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It offers care for up to 2 children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. The inspectors spoke with the child.

The post for a registered manager has been vacant since 23 January 2026. A new interim manager has been appointed.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 May 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 6 January 2026

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: Ofsted judged the home to be inadequate at the full inspection in January 2026. Two compliance notices were issued under regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard). On 26 February 2026, Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit during which it was determined that the shortfalls had not been fully

addressed, and further concerns were identified. As a result, a notice restricting accommodation was issued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/01/2026	Full	Inadequate
06/02/2025	Full	Good
29/01/2024	Full	Good
24/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Overall, improvements have been made since Ofsted last visited the home. A new interim manager has been appointed, bringing a wealth of experience to the service. Detailed plans are in place to further develop the service and address the remaining shortfalls identified during this inspection.

Inspection judgements

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

The child is supported to develop important practical life skills that will be essential when they move on from the home. Staff listen to the child's views about their future and advocate on their behalf to professionals responsible for decisions about the child's future care. Staff recognise that the child is not yet emotionally ready to live independently and have begun planning to provide appropriate support. However, these plans are still in their infancy.

The child is in good physical health. Staff support the child to arrange and attend routine health appointments with relevant services to meet their needs. Additionally, the child is developing an understanding of nutrition and can prepare healthy, balanced meals. However, when concerns arise regarding potential substance misuse, staff demonstrate limited professional curiosity to fully explore them.

Relationships between the child and staff have strengthened. The child is aware of which staff are on duty each day and speaks positively about staff and the new interim manager. As a result, the child has developed trusting and meaningful relationships with staff.

The child now attends education regularly. When barriers to attendance were identified, the previous interim manager worked effectively with external professionals to identify a suitable solution. This included arranging online tutoring at the home, alongside securing a specialist provision to meet the child's educational needs.

The child is encouraged to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff support the child by transporting them to and from family time. As a result, the child can spend quality time with family members.

The child is provided with a warm and welcoming environment. The home is decorated and furnished to meet their needs, and any maintenance issues are addressed promptly.

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

Staff understand the strategies in place to mitigate risks for the child. This includes the safe storage of potentially harmful items, as well as additional safety checks being carried out at night. Practice is supported by detailed guidance for staff to follow. However, one identified risk is not included in the child's risk plans, and staff do not recognise this as a concern. Although this shortfall has not resulted in harm, it presents a potential risk. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 12 is restated.

Following an incident in which the child stored a knife in their bedroom, staff did not carry out a search of the room. Poor advice was provided to staff through the on-call management system. As a result, staff did not take all necessary immediate safeguarding actions to mitigate potential risks. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 12 is restated.

Staff use rewards and incentives to promote positive behaviour. The child is regularly consulted about these incentives and is supported in identifying their own goals. The child has co-produced care plans with staff and the in-house behavioural analyst. These plans provide clear guidance for staff on how to respond to and support the child if behavioural incidents occur. De-escalation techniques are used effectively, and there have been no occasions where staff have needed to physically restrain the child.

The child is developing their knowledge and understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Staff carry out direct work with the child on various topics relevant to their needs. Staff talk to the child about their history and experiences and support them to understand others' perceptions and perspectives.

The child has a good understanding of the rules and boundaries at the home, and clear safety plans are in place in relation to their chosen hobbies. Staff support the child to understand appropriate behaviour and the consequences of their actions. They have worked with the child to support their safe engagement in their chosen hobby, without allowing previous mistakes to limit future opportunities.

There is now a full staff team in place. Newly recruited staff have undergone thorough and appropriate checks to ensure their suitability to work at the home. These staff members are positive additions to the home. As a result, there are now sufficient and suitably skilled staff working at the home.

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

Leaders and managers have strengthened oversight of the home since the last inspection. A new interim manager is now in post, bringing relevant experience. They understand the home's development journey and recognise its strengths and areas for improvement. Although new to the role, the manager is proactive and has made a positive impact since being appointed. However, leaders and managers need to

strengthen the on-call management system to ensure that decisions are consistently effective in protecting children's safety and wellbeing. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 13 is restated.

The quality of recording remains an area for development. The manager recognises this and has plans in place to address it. However, these plans are still in their infancy and are not yet embedded into practice. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 13 is restated.

Leaders and managers are currently reviewing their approach to considering new children moving into the home. Plans are in place to introduce staff pen pictures to further strengthen the admissions process. However, there has been limited engagement with the placing authority for the child currently living at the home to seek its views on future admissions. Progress has been slow, largely due to the notice restricting accommodation being in place. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 14 (the care planning standard) is restated.

The child's parent reported that communication with staff is limited. While the parent acknowledges challenges with their own availability, they have requested information through a range of communication methods. The manager acknowledged this is an area for development during the inspection and has plans to provide weekly updates to the parent regarding their child's care and progress.

Leaders and managers respond effectively to allegations made against staff. Records demonstrate the actions taken by the manager to resolve issues and provide a clear rationale for decisions. However, on one occasion, there was a delay in notifying the regulator. Therefore, the previous requirement issued under regulation 40 (notification of a serious event) is restated.

Staff say the home is a positive place to work. Staff report enjoying their roles and feeling well supported. Staff receive regular one-to-one supervision with the manager and have opportunities to reflect on their practice. Leaders and managers now address any shortfalls in staff practice effectively.

Team meetings are held regularly and are consistently well attended by staff. There is a strong focus on staff development, with the manager delivering workshops and additional training during these sessions. Safeguarding knowledge is tested through practice scenarios and quizzes, and staff practice is supported by the in-house therapy team. As a result, staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the child's needs.

On 22 May 2026, Ofsted held a case review and determined that the notice restricting accommodation could be lifted.

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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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; and that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi)(vii)(e)) This requirement has been restated.	20 June 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— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	20 June 2026

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; 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)(c)(f)(h)) This requirement has been restated.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) This requirement has been restated.	20 June 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) The registered person must ensure that the local authority is actively involved in all discussions necessary to support safe and well-informed decisions about children moving into the home. They must implement an effective system for assessing and	20 June 2026

understanding the combined risks presented by children living together.

This requirement has been restated.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff work in close partnership with all those involved in protecting and caring for the child. This includes providing regular updates to family members regarding the child's care and progress. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.3)

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: 2679574

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group

Registered provider address: M H A, Richard House, 9 Winckley Square, Preston PR1 3HP

Responsible individual: Paula Normanton

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Leanne Carr, Social Care Inspector
Claire Foster, Social Care Inspector

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