

2684211

Registered provider: Bay Tree House Higham Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to six children who have learning disabilities. There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The registered manager post has been vacant since August 2024.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 June 2025

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: 29 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/10/2024	Full	Good
30/01/2024	Full	Good
15/02/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care and make good progress from their starting points. They are supported to build trusting relationships with staff, who genuinely care about them. One staff member said that children know that they are loved, and they respond to staff accordingly.

Examples of children's progress include children who previously struggled to express their emotions now being able to tell staff how they are feeling, in an appropriate manner. All children are less reliant on staff when carrying out their personal care. One child is now able to have some time in the local community without staff supervision. All the children are proud of their achievements.

The development of children's communication skills is a priority for staff. Staff spend time and effort on continuously expanding children's individualised communication tools. One child who was unable to use communication tools when they arrived can now confidently use the Picture Exchange Communication System. Furthermore, communication with children through social stories enhances their understanding of daily matters and significant events in their lives.

Children's wishes and feelings are obtained through key-worker sessions and consultations. Children are regularly asked for their views. If certain wishes cannot be granted, the reasons for this are explained to them. Staff and managers proactively advocate for children. Therefore, children's rights are respected and promoted.

Staff ensure that children and their families experience positive times together, including when there are lengthy journeys involved for some children and staff. Staff work positively with parents and external professionals to ensure that children benefit from meaningful and safe family time.

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

Staff understand children's vulnerabilities and keep children safe from harm, because they have clear guidance provided to them. Comprehensive risk assessments effectively inform staff how to reduce each child's risks. One staff member said that policies and procedures are 'followed to the letter'.

Strong relationships between children and staff are an important factor in keeping children safe. Because of these positive relationships, children accept the advice that staff give them about managing their own risks. Consequently, only low-level physical restraint is used, on rare occasions.

Children do not go missing from home often. When children do leave the home without permission, staff find them quickly and bring them back to safety. Staff ensure that relevant safeguarding professionals are informed without unnecessary delay. Children are educated through social stories about the risks of going missing from home. Therefore, the frequency of such incidents has reduced over time.

The safety of children and staff is a priority for managers. When any concerns arise, these are swiftly addressed. Managers support staff to manage challenging incidents and role model good practice. Additionally, managers ensure that joint working with external professionals is effective. One child's social worker stated that they do not worry about the child because they are confident that staff and managers know how to keep the child safe.

Any complaints are taken seriously and acted on. Managers ensure that learning is applied to reduce the risk of a similar situation arising again. This reflective approach contributes to children's safety and sense of security.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders have taken appropriate action to ensure that the home has a registered manager as soon as possible. Leaders appointed a manager, but they did not apply to register with Ofsted. The responsible individual is in the process of applying to be the registered manager of the home until a new manager is appointed.

Leaders and managers are ambitious about what children can achieve and are passionate about improving children's outcomes. They have high expectations of staff.

Staff benefit from personalised development plans, and leaders provide opportunities for targeted training sessions to meet staff members' learning needs. Staff receive regular supervision and appraisals. These measures ensure that children are looked after by a well-informed staff team who understand leaders' vision for the service.

Management monitoring and oversight are mostly effective. Managers ensure that children's welfare is checked after incidents. However, debriefs for staff are not consistent. This risks missing opportunities to discuss any changes to staff practice that could be implemented to reduce the risk of a recurrence.

Managers have completed their review of the quality of care being provided to children but have not shared this with Ofsted within the timescale required by regulation.

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— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure consistent oversight of incidents and that debriefs take place after incidents with all involved, including staff members.	18 August 2025
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. The registered person must— 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) (4)(a))	18 August 2025

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: 2684211

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bay Tree House Higham Ltd

Responsible individual: Bethany Allen-Terry

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sonata Brisley, Social Care Inspector

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