

2699790

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care for one child with social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The provider has recently appointed a new manager who has applied to register with Ofsted.

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

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 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: 26 August 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/08/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/04/2024	Full	Good
24/04/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Staff know the child's risks well; however, they do not consistently follow agreed protocols or plans to prevent the child from accessing unsafe areas. They respond appropriately when the child goes missing from home, self-harms, or expresses suicidal ideation. Ongoing staffing challenges remain a concern, although leaders and managers have clear plans in place to address these. Staff receive regular supervision, and team meetings are held with support from the in-house clinical team.

Inspection judgements

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

Leaders and managers have recognised that they cannot safely meet the child's needs. They are working closely with the placing local authority to identify a suitable alternative placement. For example, they have created detailed profiles of the child's needs to support the child's new staff team. A social worker said, 'They have exhausted all options, it has been the child's longest placement in a long time'.

The child's physical health needs are met. Staff support the child to attend routine health appointments and seek medical advice when required. Additionally, staff support the child to develop healthy routines. For example, staff are creative by utilising role play to support the child to develop improved self-care routines.

There have been ongoing staff changes at the home. The child described these changes as 'difficult'. This impacts the child's ability to build positive, trusting relationships with staff. However, the child is developing relationships with some key consistent staff members.

A suitable education provision is currently being identified for the child. In the interim, the child has access to in-house tutoring. Staff actively encourage and incentivise educational attendance. As a result, attendance has improved but remains sporadic. Additionally, staff support informal learning within the home, including learning new life skills. A social worker said, 'Staff are drawing education out in other ways.'

When the child expresses their feelings and emotions, these are not always consistently explored further by staff. This lack of follow-up limits opportunities for the child to feel fully heard, listened to and reassured. Additionally, there is limited evidence to demonstrate that the child is being supported to actively participate in their care planning or statutory reviews.

Despite the complexity of the child's needs and risks, staff remain committed to supporting the child to engage in community activities. For example, the child participates in shopping trips, playing darts, visits to the zoo and trips to other cities.

These experiences support the child to maintain links with the community and provide opportunities for the child to have fun.

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

When the child is missing from home, staff follow the child's safety plan. Staff are proactive in trying to locate the child. They search local areas and work with other professionals, such as the police. The child is also offered the opportunity to speak to someone independent upon their return to explore the reasons why they were missing.

Staff are aware of the child's known risks and the measures in place to mitigate these. However, staff do not consistently follow agreed safety plans or guidance. This has resulted in the child being able to access unsafe spaces on multiple occasions. This places the child at risk of harm or injury. However, further preventative strategies have been put in place to mitigate this risk.

When there are concerns about the child's emotional wellbeing, staff seek medical advice. They support the child to engage with the in-house clinical team and external specialist services, such as child adolescent mental health services. This ensures that the child has access to support from professionals best placed to meet their needs.

Staff are confident in raising concerns and understand how to escalate these appropriately, including through the whistle-blowing procedure. When the child makes an allegation, the manager takes appropriate and timely action, escalating concerns appropriately and working closely with the local authority designated officer.

The manager has established robust safer recruitment processes, ensuring that thorough checks are undertaken. This provides assurance that children are cared for by safe and suitable adults.

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

The manager has recently joined the home and demonstrates a clear understanding of the shortfalls and areas for development. She is committed to improving the quality of care provided to children. Professionals report that the quality of care has improved since the last inspection and that communication is good. A social worker said, 'She has implemented firmer boundaries.'

The manager has monitoring and review systems in place. For example, staff receive regular supervision, and team meetings take place monthly. However, these systems are not yet effective in addressing shortfalls in staff practice and recording. This does not support learning from previous incidents to enhance the quality of care provided to children.

There have been significant changes to the staff team that have resulted in a lack of consistency and continuity of care for the child. Additionally, staff have not yet received training in key areas relevant to the child's specific needs. Although there is a clear workforce development plan that reflects upcoming training, this has not yet been fully implemented. As a result, staff are not consistently equipped with the skills and knowledge required to meet the child's needs effectively

Staff report that they feel supported and enjoy their role. Managers recognise that some staff are new to residential care and do not have the experience to manage complex incidents confidently. To support, develop and retain staff, managers regularly work alongside the team, providing guidance, oversight and support.

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 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)(iii)(vi)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that effective strategies are in place to reduce the risk of harm and that strategies implemented are understood and followed by staff.	25 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—	25 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; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— 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)(e)(g)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have the skills, experience and knowledge to meet children's needs. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that monitoring systems are effective in identifying where staff practice should improve and that all records are accurate and detailed.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to express views, wishes and feelings;	25 June 2026

help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when children express their feelings, this is explored further and appropriate support is provided. Additionally, the manager must ensure that children feel listened to and heard. Furthermore, they must ensure that children are supported to actively participate in the development of their care plan.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; strive to gain each child's respect and trust; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(viii)(ix)(xi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children develop trusting relationships with those who care for them. The registered person must ensure that staff have the skills to interpret emotions and de-escalate situations.	25 June 2026

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: 2699790

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: Sarah McClure

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Kitty Wiper, Social Care Inspector

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