

2728186

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority and provides care for up to 2 children with social and emotional difficulties. One child was living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted August 2025.

Inspectors were aware during this inspection that a serious child protection allegation was being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform inspectors' judgements.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 January 2026

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2025	Full	Good
06/11/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

During this inspection period, 3 children have moved out, and 3 children have moved in. One child was living at the home. The child spoke to the inspector and contributed to the inspection.

One child has lived at the home since October 2023 and since moved to semi-independent accommodation at a pace that was comfortable for them. One child moved to the home as an emergency admission for a week before moving to a suitable provision. One child moved into the home in a planned way. After 4 months the child was moved out of the home without notice to accommodate another child moving into the home in an emergency. This fails to provide children with consistent care or fully consider their needs.

Staff support the child to see their loved ones. Family visits involve long-distance travel. This helps the child to remain connected to family and maintain a sense of identity and emotional security.

Children make good academic progress from their starting points. One child has finished exams and achieved GCSE qualifications. Another child who had long gaps in education now engages in an accredited course. This has improved the children's self-esteem and provided life skills.

The staff nurture the child. Because of this, the child has built strong and meaningful relationships with the core staff team. Staff are warm and affectionate about the child. They focus on the importance of open and honest communication. This equips children with the skills to manage relationships better.

The staff ensure that the child is listened to and their views are valued. The child has regular opportunities to express any changes they would like to the home and to make choices about meals and activities. The child has not wanted to contribute to their care plans before living at the home. Managers and staff have empowered them to share their views. As a result, the child's voice is heard and represented to other professionals. This ensures that the child feels consulted and respected and that everyone is aware of what the child wants.

The home requires some maintenance and repair. There is a large hole in the living room wall and a collection of old furniture and electrical items in the garden. These tasks have not been addressed promptly which detracts from the homely environment. This was a recommendation from the previous inspection and is reinstated.

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

One child has complex needs and vulnerabilities. These include vulnerabilities relating to exploitation, going missing from the home, and difficulties forming appropriate relationships. Staff understand these vulnerabilities well, which helps them keep the child safe. Professionals acknowledge the child is safer because of the dedicated care they receive from staff.

Staff follow relevant plans when a child goes missing from home. Staff are supportive and non-judgemental in their practice. When the child returns to the home, the primary focus of staff is the child's wellbeing. The child has access to independent professionals when they return, with opportunities to reflect on the missing event. This approach has contributed to a reduction in missing-from-home episodes.

The child benefits from a nurturing home where positive behaviour is actively promoted. Staff use physical intervention as a last resort. They have creative ways of helping the child recognise and manage their behaviours. The approach has been successful and there is a decrease in significant incidents at the home.

The provider is in the process of recruiting more staff. There are good, safe recruitment practices. Staff are assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. These procedures help to prevent unsuitable adults from working with children

When allegations have been made against staff, they have been treated with seriousness and urgency. The manager seeks appropriate guidance from safeguarding professionals and acts to ensure the child's concerns are heard and addressed. This approach helps children feel listened to and encourages their sense of safety.

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

There is a new leadership and management team in place since the last inspection. A new registered manager is in post and is working towards the required diploma. He is supported by an experienced deputy manager. They lead a core staff team who are dedicated to the children they provide care for.

Senior leaders have made decisions regarding children moving to the home without consulting the registered manager and responsible individual. One child was moved out of the home without notice or planning. On the same day another child was moved into the home whose needs were complex and did not meet the scope of the statement of purpose. Staff did not have the knowledge, skills or confidence to manage the specific care needs of the child moving in.

The home did not have the required number of staff to safely care for the child in line with the deprivation of liberty order in place. Agency staff have been used to maintain the correct staffing ratio. However, agency workers change and are inconsistent. This has not provided stability or a sense of security for the child, who consequently will not

engage with agency staff. As the child does not include agency staff in their daily routines, the pressure on core staff to carry out all care duties, leaving them feeling anxious and fatigued

The registered manager has undertaken a quality-of-care review. Children's feedback was not used to inform areas requiring improvement. Actions have not been formulated to reflect the necessary improvements.

The manager and staff have developed positive working relationships with partner agencies. These relationships are effective in helping staff and professionals to work together to provide good care and consistency for children. Professionals speak positively about the quality of care provided to the children. One professional said that risks have decreased since the child moved to the home, due to the consistent care provided.

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— 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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2) (a)(b)(d)(e)) Ensure that leaders and managers work together in the best interests of the children and staff provide consistent care for the children in the home.	1 April 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.	1 April 2026

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)) This refers to a child’s placement ending without planning which was not considerate of their best interest or understanding of the impact of the move on the child. Ensure that children are only admitted to the home if their needs align with the statement of purpose.	
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. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c))	1 April 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that repairs in the home are carried out without delay. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: 2728186

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2DH

Responsible individual: Kirsty Cuttler

Registered manager: Adam King

Inspector

Sarah Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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