

2738398

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group Limited

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 provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

There were two children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The home does not have a registered manager.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 October 2024

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: 20 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At a full inspection on 20 June 2024, the home was judged to be inadequate. Following the inspection, Ofsted issued two compliance notices. These related to regulation 12, the protection of children standard and regulation 13, the leadership

and management standard. On 18 September 2024, a monitoring visit was undertaken and all compliance notices were met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/06/2024	Full	Inadequate
13/02/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

The children living in the home are making slow progress. They are beginning to settle into the home. On occasion, children enjoy activities outside of the home with staff. However, children remain reluctant to engage.

The children's health needs are met. Staff take the children to regular routine health appointments. Staff talk to the children about their personal health and hygiene to develop their knowledge in keeping themselves healthy and safe. Staff encourage physical activities outside of the home.

Educational provision is variable. One child is attending school regularly and making progress. When barriers to attending school for another child arise, staff take the child on educational activities outside of the home and also support academic learning in the home.

Endings are a positive experience for children who move out of the home. The manager ensures that children can visit their new home and begin to build relationships with unfamiliar staff. For one child who moved out of the home, the manager visited the child in their new home to help them to settle.

Staff recognise and understand the importance of children spending time with people who are important to them. Staff support and, when appropriate, supervise family time. This is important for the children's identity.

The home is a warm and welcoming environment. Staff help the children to personalise their bedrooms according to their individual tastes and interests. There are photos of the children throughout the home. Any maintenance issues are addressed.

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

Following one significant incident, staff have not taken appropriate steps to safeguard one child. Welfare checks overnight were not completed by staff when a child returned to the home heavily intoxicated. The child's access to alcohol in the community was not explored by staff. Opportunities were not taken to explore a child's safety and welfare.

Risks to the children are reducing. A social worker said, '[The children] are no longer considered to be at risk of exploitation.' The frequency of missing-from-home incidents is reducing. When children do go missing from the home, staff follow the children's individual safety plans. Staff make attempts to locate the children and

return them safely home. Staff talk to the children to understand the reasons for going missing and to reduce reoccurrence.

Staff complete regular direct-work sessions with the children. Staff discuss a range of topics to develop the children's knowledge. This includes keeping themselves safe and learning new skills that will be required when they move on from the home.

Staff use rewards, incentives and de-escalation techniques to manage the children's behaviour. Consequences implemented by staff are proportionate and appropriate to the behaviour displayed. There have been no instances where children have been physically held by staff.

Children's medication is stored safely. There are clear plans in place for administering medication, with detailed guidance for staff to follow. Records of medications administered are clear, and regular medication audits are completed.

The children know how to make a complaint. Staff discuss how to make a confidential complaint with the children. Complaints forms and a new QR code are now readily accessible in the home. However, this new system has not been used so the manager has not had an opportunity to assess its suitability.

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

Shortfalls in staff practice are not always identified or addressed by the manager. Although monitoring and reviewing systems have improved, further work is required to strengthen the process in place. The manager continues to be supported by the responsible individual to develop his oversight of the home.

The manager communicates well with partner agencies. Professionals say they are kept well informed of the children's care. The manager advocates on behalf of the children and shares their wishes and feelings during multi-agency meetings. However, the manager does not escalate his concerns when local authorities do not complete required tasks in agreed timescales.

Staff say they receive support from leaders and managers. Staff morale has improved and communication across the staff team is now ensuring that children receive a consistent quality of care. Staff say the leadership and management of the home have improved and they are given clearer direction.

Supervision of staff and team meetings take place regularly. Staff have plenty of opportunities to discuss and reflect on the quality of care they provide to children. Staff's strengths and future aspirations are discussed.

Staff are provided with a wide range of training to meet the individual needs of the children. Leaders and managers complete development sessions with staff to improve the quality of care for children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))	22 November 2024
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))	22 November 2024
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.	22 November 2024

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (1) (3) (5))	
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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: 2738398

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group Limited

Registered provider address: Richard House, 9 Winckley Square, Preston,
Lancashire PR1 3HP

Responsible individual: Michelle Donaghey

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Leanne Carr, Social Care Inspector

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