

2744586

Registered provider: Karenest Ilford Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered with Ofsted in September 2023 and is privately owned. It provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

There has been no registered manager in post since 29 November 2024.

In August 2025, Ofsted was notified that a serious incident had occurred at the setting.

Ofsted has issued a notice to restrict accommodation at the home and on 2 September 2025 carried out a monitoring visit. At the time of this visit, there were no children living at the home. Six requirements and one recommendation were made.

This monitoring visit was undertaken to review the restriction of accommodation and whether the provider was meeting the statutory requirements made at the previous monitoring visit.

The inspector was aware during this inspection that the serious incident at the setting continued to be under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the incident were considered, where appropriate, alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection, to inform the inspector's judgements.

Inspection date: 11 November 2025

This monitoring visit

At the time of this visit, there were no children living at the home. Leaders and managers have complied with the notice to restrict accommodation and are sharing information to support partner agency investigations. While these investigations remain ongoing, necessary safeguards to protect the children and staff involved are in place.

There have been multiple changes in the leadership of this home since registration. Instability in the leadership team is a significant and continuing concern. Since the last inspection, the responsible individual and interim manager have resigned. The current responsible individual is new to this role; Ofsted is in the process of assessing this responsible individual's suitability.

There has been no registered manager for the last 12 months. Since the last inspection, senior leaders have taken steps to recruit to this position. One manager who was appointed did not possess the competencies and skills to fulfil this role. Their employment ended after a short period of time. The current manager has been in post for less than one month, having moved from a quality assurance role within the organisation. This manager has not applied to register with Ofsted. The regulator is therefore unable to assess the manager's fitness and suitability for the role.

There are systemic weaknesses in the organisation's recruitment practice. Interview records for new managers lack sufficient detail. Records do not include the names and position of the full interview panel. Important discussions around the applicant's previous employment are not always recorded. The rationale for offering the position of registered manager is not evidenced. It is not clear who made the decision, or why the applicant is deemed suitable for this post.

The newly formed leadership team has implemented action plans to address areas of concern and weakness, of which the director of the organisation has oversight. They have demonstrated some progress.

The new managers now have supervision at regular intervals as depicted by a reviewed policy. These sessions include performance reviews when concerns arise, support plans and well-being checks.

Training for staff and managers that is relevant to their roles and focused on managing risks for children is taking place. The current manager reviews staff's competency and understanding of this learning.

The current manager understands the importance of sharing detailed and timely information about children and serious incidents with partner agencies and Ofsted. They have new reports to use and systems to monitor them.

Leaders and managers have reviewed the assessment process relating to children's admissions to the home. There is an expectation that senior leaders will ensure greater scrutiny of decisions about whether a new child can move in. Due to the current restriction of accommodation, the quality of the critical analysis and viability of children's placements cannot be determined.

The staff team is currently redeployed to work elsewhere in the organisation. Discussions held during team meetings ensure that the staff have support. This promotes cohesivity for the team while the home is closed. The quality of direct care for children cannot yet be reviewed as there are no children living in the home.

Leaders and managers have reviewed risk management practice and relevant guidance for staff. This guidance includes a practice example of a child's behaviour support plan. This plan refers to the assessment and support strategies needed to reduce risk for the child of sexual exploitation and going missing from care, specifically around the supervision of social media use. This guidance to staff is vague as the manager has not identified what this level of supervision and observation should look like. The guidance is not clear as to how and when checks should be made in response to risk. This has the potential to leave the application of the child's support too open to staff members' interpretation.

The responsible individual has completed a lesson learned evaluation for a child's placement at the home. They identified a need to provide clearer strategies and guidance to staff to ensure a cohesive and coordinated approach to help the child at times of crisis. The manager has failed to demonstrate improved practice. The support strategies recorded are not well defined. The requirement to improve staff members' understanding of the supervision and observations needed to protect children who are vulnerable to an identified risk is a repeated concern at this home.

Leaders and managers do not review the quality of care for children, as required in regulation, at least once every six months. The period from March 2025 to August 2025 has not been evaluated. This is a missed opportunity to reflect and make plans for service development. This lack of oversight in the management monitoring is indicative of unstable leadership. The number of changes in management is resulting in a lack of accountability and scrutiny. This is a weakness in leadership that needs to improve. The failure to provide Ofsted with the quality of care review limits the regulator's oversight of the home.

A new independent person carries out the monthly external monitoring of the home. The reports do not provide sufficient scrutiny or analysis of key information that is relevant to the safety and protection of children. Leaders and managers have not identified that the quality of the reports has the potential to inhibit service development. Poor external monitoring limits the regulator's and partner professionals' understanding of safeguarding practice in the home.

Three of the requirements and the recommendation raised at the last inspection are restated. Three new requirements have been made. Ofsted has issued a second notice to restrict accommodation at the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/04/2025	Full	Good
21/05/2024	Full	Good
26/02/2024	Full	Good

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home; and the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)) The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home. The person appointed to be in day-to-day charge of the home must submit a complete application to register with Ofsted. This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	23 December 2025
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	23 December 2025

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)) Leaders and managers must ensure that support strategies to mitigate emerging risks for children are well defined in behaviour support plans. Also, they must ensure that there is clear guidance for staff on the expectations around observations and checks made on children who are vulnerable to an identified risk. This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(b)) The registered person must ensure that records of staff interviews include who has conducted the interview and the decisions around the suitability to appoint to that position.	23 December 2025
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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)) Leaders and managers must ensure that they fully consider the needs of children moving into the home as well as those of the children already living in the home.	23 December 2025

This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the report produced about a visit by the independent person should include a review of relevant and necessary information to record an informed view of the safety and well-being of children.	23 December 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. (Regulation 45 (1))	23 December 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff use language that is helpful to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2744586

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Karenest Ilford Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2a, 420 Eastern Avenue, Ilford IG2 6NQ

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Alexandra Howitt, Social Care Inspector

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