

2754328

Registered provider: Progress Children's Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and provides short-term care for up to five children with learning and/or physical disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living at the home.

A permanent registered manager with suitable experience oversees the home.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 October 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: 18 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/06/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, 12 children have moved into the home and eight have moved out, in line with the home's short-term care model. The inspector spoke with all four children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Children often move into the home under urgent circumstances. The manager responds swiftly, gathering as much information as possible during the short window around each child's arrival. She liaises with social workers and other professionals involved in the child's life, including those in education. To support transitions, the manager has created a video of the home, which is shared with children before their arrival. The video helps to provide a sense of familiarity and reassurance by showing what the home looks like and what to expect. This makes the move into the home less overwhelming for children.

Children move out of the home in line with their individual plans. They receive photos of their time at the home, along with goodbye cards and gifts. Staff also organise farewell parties to celebrate their time there. To support a smooth transition, the manager and in-house therapist carry out detailed assessments and share them with relevant professionals. This helps maintain continuity of support and makes the transition as seamless as possible.

Children are encouraged to express their views using their preferred methods of communication. These include the Picture Exchange Communication System, Makaton, and signs and symbols. Staff know the children well and are skilled in interpreting vocal tones, facial expressions and body language to understand what each child wants. As a result, staff can respond effectively to children's wishes and feelings.

Children experience good health. Staff understand each child's individual health needs and encourage them to attend routine appointments. They also help children to make sense of their life journeys through daily conversations and the use of social stories, which supports their emotional well-being.

Children are well supported in their education. Daily communication with school staff ensures that children's experiences are consistently understood. One education provider commented, 'Very good communication with the home.' This strong partnership enables home and school staff to remain alert and respond effectively to any emerging issues.

Children maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Staff are empathetic towards children's families and recognise that by supporting family members, they are also supporting the child. One parent said, 'I spoke to a member of staff every night, and I was updated well. I had no worries.'

Although the home is welcoming and suitably furnished, it does not reflect the children's individual likes and interests. When the inspector raised this issue with the manager, she

took prompt action. By the second day of the inspection, each child's bedroom and personal space showcased elements of their individuality and personal preferences.

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

Children form strong, trusting relationships with staff, built on mutual respect and affection. Children are regularly seen chatting, laughing, and holding staff members' hands, clearly demonstrating emotional bonds. One social worker said, '[Name of child] has built fantastic relationships with the staff.' Children feel safe in the home and have confidence in the staff who care for them.

The manager takes prompt action when there are allegations or complaints. She promptly shares information with relevant professionals to prevent delays and safeguard children from harm. Children are kept informed of any outcomes. This ensures that children feel confident raising concerns.

The manager takes immediate action when concerns are raised about staff practice. She addresses shortfalls directly with staff and helps them understand how their actions affect children. As a result, the quality of care that children receive improves.

Physical interventions are rare, and when they occur, they are used proportionately and as a final measure. Following such incidents, children are spoken to, and as a result, they feel listened to and safe.

Staff and children participate in regular fire drills. Children have personal evacuation plans that help staff understand the level of support each child requires to evacuate the home safely. This helps keep everyone living and working at the home safe in the event of a fire.

Not all children have had access to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure that they receive the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and life. As a result, there is a risk that children may not fully understand their rights or have access to the entitlements and support available.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is an experienced, child-centred practitioner who has high aspirations for children and the staff team. She creates a culture of positivity and has high expectations of her staff to change and improve the lives of the children they are responsible for.

Staff are extremely positive about the support they receive from the manager. One member of staff said, 'The manager is brilliant, very, very supportive.' Another said, 'She knows exactly what is going on, what support we need, and what the children need.'

Staff are supported through practice-based supervision, where reflective conversations about their well-being take centre stage. The home's therapist provides additional supervision for staff, focusing on equipping them to better support the children. The

manager also ensures that staff performance is appraised annually. These practices help ensure that staff are well supported in their roles and ongoing professional development.

The manager holds reflective team meetings, creating additional learning opportunities to enhance staff practice. For example, staff recently participated in a knowledge quiz on the current support available for deaf children, followed by a group discussion to consolidate learning. Staff also use these sessions to review their learning and discuss which support strategies were effective and which were less effective after children move out. These discussions help staff improve their practice and deepen their knowledge to better understand children's complex needs.

Staff access a wide range of training to ensure that they can meet the diverse needs of the children in their care. In addition, they work in close partnership with the in-house therapist to embed the home's model of care into daily practice. This coordinated approach helps staff respond to each child's individual needs in the most effective and consistent way.

Although the manager has implemented some effective monitoring systems, they have not consistently identified shortfalls and gaps in recording. For example, not all children have their current and up-to-date local authority care plans and review minutes on file. One child's local authority plan contained inaccurate information that leaders did not challenge. Another child's plan had not been updated to reflect changes agreed during a recent review. There were also recording errors across some documentation. This lack of oversight has the potential to negatively affect the quality of care that children receive.

Partnership working with external agencies and parents is positive. Professionals have commended the manager and staff for their effective communication and the quality of care provided to children. One education professional said, '[Name of child] has made a radical difference since being in the home.' A parent commented, 'They did everything they could to help them.'

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they receive a copy of each child's local authority care plan and all review minutes. Any inaccuracies identified in the minutes or associated plans must be promptly challenged. The registered manager must also ensure that each child's plans are updated to reflect any changes arising from the review.	10 November 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home's environment, including each child's bedroom, reflects their individual likes, interests and personalities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that all children can access appropriate advocacy support and have an independent advocate to advise them and ensure that they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)

- The registered person should ensure that their internal monitoring systems are effective in identifying shortfalls in practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2754328

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Progress Children's Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Progress House, 127 Millfields Road, Wolverhampton
WV4 6JG

Responsible individual: Tina Bhardwaj

Registered manager: Nicole Clayton

Inspector

Jas Nahar, Social Care Inspector

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