

2771481

Registered provider: Sweet Hope Manor Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by an independent provider. It is registered to provide care for up to 4 children with emotional or social difficulties.

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

At the time of the inspection, 2 children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 June 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 20 May 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
20/05/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/09/2024	Full	Good

Summary of findings

There have been several serious incidents in recent months, during which staff have not consistently followed safety plans and risk assessments, placing children at risk of harm.

Difficult relationships between children have contributed to instability within the home, resulting in some children leaving and others not consistently feeling safe.

Weak management oversight has meant that failures in staff practice, including not following agreed plans, have not been identified or addressed, and opportunities to strengthen practice have been missed.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children's experiences and progress in the home are inconsistent. Difficult relationships between children have led to incidents of conflict, including physical altercations, and some children have reported not feeling safe as a result. Staff have not consistently supported children to repair relationships or foster a stable and harmonious living environment.

Children live in a home that is generally maintained to a satisfactory standard. However, some areas require redecoration to create a more modern and welcoming environment. Standards of cleanliness and maintenance are not consistently upheld, and the external shed contains unused items that present a potential fire risk.

There has been inconsistency in planning children's moves into the home, with planning not always robust or well considered. This resulted in a vulnerable child moving in during a period of instability and experiencing significant peer difficulties with an existing child. In contrast, the current manager has demonstrated improved practice by carefully assessing the impact of a subsequent move into the home, leading to the child settling well and a reduction in missing-from-care incidents.

Key-work sessions are regularly completed with young people and cover a range of relevant topics, including healthy relationships and sexual health. However, these sessions have not always been effective in addressing behaviours, as they have lacked sufficient challenge and support for children.

Feedback from professionals is mixed but indicates that children are making some individual progress at the home. One professional highlighted that inconsistent staff communication has led to missed educational opportunities. In contrast, another professional reported that staff support during tutoring has been effective, contributing to positive progress in a child's learning.

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

Staff do not demonstrate sufficient safeguarding awareness. They have not consistently followed risk assessments and safety plans or maintained required levels of supervision, resulting in significant incidents where children have been harmed or placed at risk, including incidents requiring police involvement. Staff recording lacks sufficient detail to evidence their actions and decision-making.

Staff have not consistently positioned themselves in line with safety plans to supervise children effectively, resulting in safeguarding incidents not being identified or responded to promptly. This has enabled children to engage in high-risk behaviours, including bringing alcohol into the home, concealing other children in bedrooms, and going missing overnight due to staff not following agreed risk assessments. Management investigations into these incidents have lacked robustness and professional curiosity, failing to identify and address weaknesses in staff practice, which has allowed poor practice to become embedded.

Staff do not consistently apply the home's trauma-informed approach to managing behaviours that challenge. In one instance, a young person experienced harm following a disputed physical intervention that was not recorded by the staff involved, raising serious concerns about transparency and accountability. Additionally, records of other physical interventions lack sufficient exploration with staff and children to ensure that these incidents were appropriate and in line with agreed practice.

The newly established management team has taken steps to improve risk assessments. However, home safety plans and individual risk assessments are not consistently aligned, particularly regarding required levels of supervision. This lack of clarity may lead to staff confusion and inconsistent implementation of safeguarding measures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Previous management oversight, including team discussions, has not consistently addressed poor staff practice where children have been placed at risk through failure to follow agreed plans. This lack of challenge has allowed unsafe practice to become embedded and has limited opportunities for staff reflection and learning.

The manager has not prioritised staff learning or ensured completion of mandatory and relevant training, including training specific to children's needs, such as understanding self-harming behaviours. While staff are enrolled on required qualifications, several are outside timescales or unlikely to complete within required deadlines, resulting in gaps in knowledge and practice.

Independent visits take place regularly. However, reports lack sufficient analysis of incidents to support managerial reflection and improvement. In addition, limited time spent in the home reduces opportunities to observe practice, view children's living environments and gather children's views.

There are gaps in the safer recruitment of staff working at the home. This means that the manager cannot be assured of the appropriateness of staff to work with children.

There are not risk assessments in place for all staff who have conflicts of interest with each other. Where these have been completed, they have not been recently reviewed or updated. Appropriate steps have not been taken to ensure all staff understand how to whistleblow appropriately if required.

Staff's experience of working at the home is mixed. Some staff shared that a series of changes at the home has impacted morale and one staff member described the working environment as 'toxic'. Others shared positively about managerial change and better direction being offered to them.

Staff are beginning to receive clearer direction and oversight from leaders, who have identified weaknesses in practice and set expectations for improvement. However, these improvements are not yet consistently embedded, and the impact on children's safety, stability and experiences is not yet fully evident.

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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; 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; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e))	24 July 2026

In particular, the responsible person should ensure that staff understand and implement children's agreed safety plans and risk assessments and the manager is assured of their compliance. Also, ensure that children's experiences in the home are understood and effectively responded to by staff and recorded clearly. Also, ensure that children are supported to have positive relationships with each other and that clear records are kept of all physical interventions undertaken.	
*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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; 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) (f) (h)) In particular, the responsible person should ensure the manager has effective systems of oversight on both the progress of children and staff practice to inform required changes in the care offered to children. Also, ensure all staff have access to training that meets the needs of children and that conflicts of interest among staff are risk assessed to support whistleblowing when required.	24 July 2026
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.	24 July 2026

The registered person may only—
employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or

if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

The requirements are that—
full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.

(Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- 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. In particular this relates to staff ensuring records have enough detail to describe the events clearly. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to their behaviour. Homes must also meet children’s basic day to day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child’s basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of the information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. This specifically relates to the home’s development plan. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2771481

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sweet Hope Manor Limited

Registered provider address: 71–75 Shelton Street, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9JQ

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Louise Copping, Social Care Inspector
Daniel Sancto, Social Care Inspector

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