

2774125

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 two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2024.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 August 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
---	-------------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
---	------------

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor, and they are not making progress.

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Significant shortfalls in safeguarding practice and ineffective leadership and management in the home have had a detrimental impact on children's safety and their overall progress and experiences while living in the home.

Children's emotional well-being is not appropriately managed or supported by the staff in the home, who respond reactively following serious incidents. The lack of professional curiosity and proactive response to children's behaviours has led to a deterioration in children's mental health and a significant increase in self-harming behaviours, which demand a response by staff.

There is a lack of routines and structure in the home. Children are often awake during the night and then are allowed to sleep through the day. This significantly limits opportunities for any meaningful work to be completed with children.

The communal areas of the home are welcoming, with photos of children throughout the home. However, one child's bedroom was very messy with piles of clothes on the floor. This impacts on the staff's ability to effectively complete thorough searches of children's bedrooms to remove items that they can use to harm themselves.

Staff support and encourage the children to spend time with their families. Staff recognise and understand the importance of the children maintaining family links and spending quality time with their family and friends. This is important for the children's identity.

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

When significant incidents have taken place, staff do not always recognise the risks to children and do not always take appropriate action to reduce the risks. During one significant incident when a child climbed on to the home's roof, staff did not follow the child's individual safety plan and failed to take any immediate action to safeguard the child. This resulted in the child being at risk of significant harm and/or injury.

Staff have not been provided with timely opportunity to reflect on the incident or their practice to identify lessons learned. The registered manager has not had appropriate oversight of the incident to identify the shortfalls. Senior leaders have not identified or taken effective action to address the lack of oversight by the registered manager.

When children go missing from the home, staff attempt to search for and locate children themselves. However, children's safety plans are not always followed by staff, and there have been significant delays in staff reporting children missing from home to the police.

There have been a high number of occasions where children have self-injured. Following incidents of self-harm, staff administer first aid and seek medical attention for children as required. However, staff do not complete searches of children's bedrooms in a timely

manner. This means that children are left in an environment where they could potentially self-harm again as staff have failed to ensure that all items of concern have been removed.

Prior to children moving into the home, the registered manager completes a risk assessment. However, the registered manager has not effectively considered the potential impact of the identified risks for children already living in the home. For one previously settled child, this has had a significant detrimental impact on the stability of their placement.

Fire doors are left propped open. This compromises the effectiveness of the home's fire safety measures and places children and staff at potential risk in the event of a fire.

Children's individual safety plans are detailed, with guidance for staff to follow. The registered manager ensures that these are regularly reviewed and updated following any incidents.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Ineffective leadership and management in the home is having a significant impact on the ability of the staff team to safeguard the children effectively. Serious incidents have not been managed appropriately, leaving children at risk of harm. Oversight from leaders and managers has failed to identify the significant shortfalls or take effective action to improve practice.

A potential allegation made by a child against a staff member was not investigated. This raises concerns about staff, including the registered manager's understanding of their responsibilities in recognising and reporting such allegations. The failure to ensure that concerns are appropriately explored and escalated places children at considerable risk.

There have been a high number of incidents occurring in the home, resulting in staff being awake all night. Staff are attempting to maintain consistency for children. However, because of the extensive working hours, staff are feeling exhausted, and this is impacting on their practice. Leaders and managers have not taken effective action to support the staff team.

Given the significant concerns, a case review was held and the decision made to suspend the home.

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— 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; 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))	29 September 2025
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—	29 September 2025

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; and 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))	
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. 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))	29 September 2025
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; and make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(c))	29 September 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered manager receiving supervision in line with the provider's timescales. This is restated from the previous inspection.	29 September 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff 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: 2774125

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Northridge Care Group Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Joanne Kitchener

Registered manager: Cali Baron

Inspectors

Leanne Carr, Social Care Inspector
Carrie Mayes, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked-after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2025