

2794304

Registered provider: CareTech Holding Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private organisation and provides care for up to 8 children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

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

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2025.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 December 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: 11 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from positive and trusting relationships with consistent staff who know them well. This enables children to experience stability and continuity in their care. Since the last inspection, no children have moved in or out of the home, which reflects the staff's ability to meet children's individual needs effectively. All children were seen during the inspection, and observations indicate that they are happy, settled and feel secure in their home environment.

Children's care is delivered in a child-focused and nurturing manner. Staff demonstrate warmth and commitment, investing time and effort to help children achieve their individual goals. Given the complexity of children's needs, progress is highly individualised. For example, one child has broadened the range of foods they will eat, while another child has made significant progress with speech and toileting. Achievements are recognised and celebrated through certificates and rewards chosen by the children, promoting a sense of pride and accomplishment.

Children take part in a wide range of activities, both inside and outside the home, that are planned around their interests and preferences. During the summer holidays, they attended a local club for children with disabilities, which provided opportunities to meet new people and develop social skills. Children also enjoy outings to parks, local shops and theme parks, as well as celebrating birthdays and special events with parties in the home. These experiences help children to feel included, build confidence and have fun.

Children receive effective support to maintain their health, and staff carry out care tasks confidently and sensitively. They ensure that children attend all health appointments, including specialist consultations, and seek medical attention promptly when children are unwell. Staff remain with children in hospital if admission is required, providing reassurance and continuity of care. One child with a life-limiting illness is supported to enjoy a high quality of life. They take part in activities that they value, such as pampering sessions and having their hair styled.

Children are supported to maintain meaningful contact with people who are important to them. Staff foster positive relationships with family members, who are welcomed into the home for visits. Feedback from families is highly positive. They value the quality of care provided and the warm, homely environment that helps children to feel secure and connected.

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

Children are kept safe through appropriate staffing levels and by staff who understand how to manage their behaviours and sensory needs. Clear strategies are in place to de-escalate situations, resulting in behavioural incidents being rare. When behaviours do

escalate, staff respond calmly and confidently, ensuring that children remain safe and supported.

Staff work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that children's complex health needs are met and that they remain safe. This 'team-around-the-child' approach enables staff to develop a thorough understanding of each child's needs and how to provide care safely and effectively. For example, when a parent expressed concern about a change to their child's specialist feed, the manager promptly sought advice from the dietician. They reassured the parent that the change was in the child's best interests, strengthening trust and confidence in the care provided.

Medication is administered safely, and staff follow correct procedures. Two medication errors have occurred; these were identified promptly and addressed in line with medical advice. The staff involved renewed their training to reinforce safe practice and ensure their continued competence in administering medication. No children experienced harm as a result of these errors, and lessons learned have strengthened the home's medication management processes.

The home provides a warm, welcoming and inclusive environment, where children feel comfortable and secure. All necessary safety checks are completed regularly to ensure that specialist equipment is safe, well maintained and suitable for children's needs, promoting their safety and wellbeing.

Staff understand how to raise concerns. When they do, they are listened to and issues are investigated promptly. Leaders and managers ensure that staff are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities, creating a culture where safeguarding is prioritised. As a result, staff are confident to speak up and take action to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a change of manager since the last inspection. The transition was managed effectively, minimising any disruption for children and staff. The new manager is suitably experienced, has settled well into the role and provides strong support that staff value. This continuity of leadership helps to maintain stability and a consistent approach to care.

Managers place children at the centre of their work, and they promote a child-focused approach across the staff team. As a result, staff work collaboratively and share a common goal of ensuring that children are happy, safe and supported to achieve their goals. This positive ethos is evident throughout the home. Staff report feeling valued and motivated, which contributes to stability and consistently good care for children.

Staff benefit from regular, high-quality supervision and support, which enables them to reflect on their practice and identify opportunities for development. Any shortfalls in practice are addressed promptly. Managers take robust action when necessary to ensure that only suitable and competent individuals work in the home, maintaining children's safety and wellbeing.

Managers use a range of tools to monitor the home and, overall, these are effective. However, one child's records had not been audited for several months and the documentation lacked sufficient detail to identify missing key documents. There was limited evidence of follow up and escalation, and the documents remain outstanding. Managers have acknowledged this shortfall and are taking steps to strengthen auditing processes to ensure timely and accurate record-keeping.

Staff have received training to meet the needs of the children living in the home; however, there is insufficient evidence of training in alternative forms of communication. In addition, several mandatory courses have expired and have not been refreshed in a timely manner. While the manager currently relies on a senior manager to monitor training compliance, they need to maintain clear oversight and ensure that all outstanding training is completed without delay to uphold safe and effective practice.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. This specifically relates to ensuring that monitoring tools are used effectively to identify missing care documents and chasing them promptly. It also relates to ensuring that the completion of staff training is monitored effectively so that staff do not go over timescales for refresher training. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, 2015, paragraph 10.24, page 55)

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: 2794304

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: CareTech Holding Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Alison McIntosh

Inspector

Vicky Smith, Social Care Inspector

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