

2805993

Registered provider: Arborvitae Care Services Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to 4 children who experience emotional and/or social difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home.

Inspection date: 17 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 14 October 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children benefit from regular key-work sessions that support them to explore a range of important topics, including making safe choices, understanding culture and diversity, using respectful language and developing personal routines. These sessions take place frequently and include both planned work and spontaneous discussions, giving children consistent opportunities to reflect and learn.

Children have transition assessments when they move into the home, however, these do not outline the specific skills, training or experience that staff need to meet each child's individual needs. As a result, staff are not provided with clear guidance from the outset about how best to support children as they move into the home.

The home is maintained to a good standard. However, some communal areas require repair and redecoration to ensure a homely environment.

Children maintain meaningful relationships with their families. Staff communicate promptly with parents when incidents occur, ensuring families remain informed and involved in their child's care. This supports continuity and helps sustain positive family connections.

Children are supported to reflect on incidents, through restorative discussions. Staff use these opportunities to help children understand the impact of their behaviour and rebuild relationships. This contributes to a consistent and learning-focused approach to behaviour support.

Children are supported by staff who usually de-escalate situations well, with physical intervention used only when necessary. However, incident records do not always include the names of all staff involved, and not all staff are provided with a debrief. Together with inconsistent responses, such as sometimes allowing and sometimes confiscating vapes, these shortfalls limit the manager's ability to fully review incidents and strengthen staff practice to keep children safe.

Children are safeguarded because allegations are taken seriously. Leaders and managers take prompt action to remove individuals who may pose a risk while investigations take place. This ensures that children are protected from potential harm and reassured that concerns are acted on quickly and appropriately.

The manager post is currently vacant. Since the full inspection, an interim manager was appointed but has since left, and the deputy manager has stepped up to the role. As a result, children have experienced inconsistent leadership, particularly in the continuity and quality of management oversight.

Leaders and managers have developed an action plan to address identified shortfalls and maintain progress across key areas of practice. Children's progress has been reviewed, and placement stability meetings have been held to consider children's needs and the support required to sustain their placement.

Staff have been provided with opportunities during team meetings to revisit required standards and reflect on how these should be applied in daily practice. These actions help maintain oversight and promote consistency, despite recent changes in leadership.

The progress made in meeting the requirements set at the full inspection was reviewed at this inspection, and some have been met. Not all remaining requirements could be considered in full and these will be reviewed at the next full inspection. Two additional requirements have been set in relation to shortfalls identified during this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be 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 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that oversight identifies risks for children and that these risks are addressed in line with children's plans. Staff must clearly understand their roles and responsibilities, including following the actions set out in risk assessments and	26 April 2026

behaviour management plans, specifically in relation to vaping.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that— children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(vii)) Specifically, ensure that the home is maintained to an appropriate standard and that repairs and redecoration are carried out.	26 April 2026
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;	26 April 2026

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This relates specifically to the manager ensuring that any negative consequences used are proportionate. Details of the people involved must be recorded in full and a debrief must take place with all involved.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5(d)) This relates specifically to the manager working in collaboration with the child's placing authority to meet the objectives set out in the child's plans, particularly in relation to reducing restrictions placed on the child and developing relationships with families.	26 April 2026

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2805993

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Arborvitae Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 73 Liverpool Road, Crosby, Liverpool L23 5SE

Responsible individual: Claire Moore

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Nicola Forrester, Social Care Inspector
Sally Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

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