

SC004085

Registered provider: Diverse Abilities Plus Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by an independent charitable organisation. The home provides a short breaks service for up to four children who may have sensory impairments, physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2014.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 September 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 8 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/05/2024	Full	Good
25/07/2023	Full	Good
15/11/2022	Full	Good
20/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are committed to the children that they care for. They see children for who they are, consider their individual needs and treat them with dignity and respect. Children's ability to complete even the smallest new task is celebrated and shared with family and other professionals. Staff encourage children to develop their independence and enjoy their time at the service.

Staff support children to participate in an array of different activities. Staff are mindful of how different activities can support children's sensory needs and encourage these. Activities enjoyed by children include messy play, baking and arts and crafts. When possible, they take home things that they have made so they can show their family. Children have taken part in fundraising activities, such as a fancy dress walk, to gather funds for a new minibus.

Staff liaise with children's family members and other professionals to develop their understanding of how children communicate. They develop relationships with children and understand their speech, sounds, body language and behaviours. Children are supported to choose what they want to do while they are on their break. However, they are not provided with opportunities to raise a concern or reflect on the care that they receive.

Staff take photographs to document children's experiences. They are beginning to develop scrap books for children, which will provide a lasting record of their time at the provision. However, written recordings that document children's time at the provision lack essential detail. Some language used in documents about children is not appropriate. Some documents are written as if it were the child when this is not the child's words.

Children benefit from a provision that meets their needs. Spacious and accessible areas provide for play and sensory time. Planning is in place to revamp children's bedrooms and to make them more personalised to individual children when they stay. The television is protected with a removable screen, due to several recent breakages. However, this is not removed at times when it is not needed. This gives the room an institutionalised look and feel.

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

Staff understand children's risks and take action to keep them safe. Parents and social workers are assured that children are safe while being cared for at the provision. They have confidence in staff's ability to meet their child's complex needs. Parents say that children look forward to their time away. They value the opportunities it provides for not only their child, but their family. However, not all parents are provided with the level of feedback and information they would like following children's stays.

Staff receive in-house training that is developed with the specific needs of the children who use the provision in mind. They can request additional training and consultations with the clinical nurse to support their learning, development and ongoing practice. Robust care planning and assessment of risk are formulated in conjunction with children's families and other professionals. Specialist equipment is available for children who need it.

The safeguarding of children is a priority. Staff complete body maps for each child and closely monitor behaviours of concern, such as self-injurious behaviours. Staff attend meetings about children and share essential information with other professionals and parents. The monitoring and observations of one child have contributed to a decision to complete further investigations into what may be causing a child significant distress.

Medication for children is monitored and safely stored. Staff liaise with children's parents to keep up to date with any changes to medication. When there have been errors in the administration of medication, staff monitor children, seek medical advice and inform parents and social workers. Thorough investigations are completed and learning from these is shared throughout the team. Managers ensure that learning is taken on through observations of practice.

Incidents involving challenging or negative behaviour are rare. Behaviours seen from children are more linked to their need to communicate their needs and wants. Restraint and guides have been used appropriately to keep children safe. However, written recordings of these incidents lack information about children and staff actions, providing only the very essential details. Managers have completed reviews of trends in behaviours leading to incidents, which has informed care planning. Children are not supported to understand why staff have taken restrictive actions following incidents.

Staff have a good knowledge of children's behaviours and how to support them to manage these. Documents that consider children's risks are well written and informative and individual risks and how these can be mitigated are clearly documented. However, planning that would provide staff with essential guidance on how to support children to leave the provision in the event of an emergency has not been completed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The provision is led by an experienced leadership and management team. Since the last inspection, the manager has made some progress in developing the provision. They are committed to making the changes that are needed. However, the provision's development plan is generalised rather than focused on specific development points. There is a distinct lack of management oversight across the provision and on documents about children. Analysis and evaluation of staff practice are rare as is full consideration of children's behaviours and experiences. These shortfalls hinder leaders' and managers' ability to make improvement to the service.

There is a focus on the development of staff skills across the board. Lead workers have been provided with bespoke training that aims to develop their leadership skills so that they can provide care workers with the leadership, consistency and direction that they require. This is a new process, and there is currently limited evidence that it has had a positive impact on the quality of practice, particularly supervision and recording.

Staff talk positively about the support that they receive from managers. They value the training opportunities and enjoy their work. They report that supervision sessions meet their needs. Written recordings of supervision sessions do not provide a thorough overview of the discussion that takes place.

Changes in the staffing team and ongoing recruitment issues have led to the service closing for periods and not taking on new children. This allows for the children who do use the service to receive the quality of care that they need. Agency staff have been used to fill the gaps. Parents and social workers are confident that the changes in staffing are not negatively impacting on the children or their quality of care.

Planning for children to start using the provision is not documented. Managers gain information from parents, social workers and health professionals. They meet families and children. However, there is no analysis of how staff will meet the child's needs and no formal consideration of which children should spend time in the provision at the same time.

Complaints are taken seriously and fully investigated. Outcomes are appropriate and action is taken to improve practice. One complaint has led to a much bigger piece of work between the provision, other professionals and a parent in order to ensure a child's safety in all areas of their life.

The statement of purpose is not regularly updated, which hinders those who use the provision and the regulators understanding of what the service intends to provide.

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 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— 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)(c) (2)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that there are clear processes in place to monitor the care and support provided in the home. This should include proper scrutiny of incidents that occur and staff's responses to them to identify any learning. The manager must ensure that they use processes of monitoring and review to make improvements in the home. In addition, the registered person must ensure that details of the care that children receive are recorded in a way that allows the reader to understand the child's experiences.	29 November 2025

The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document; ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about— the children's guide; how to make a complaint or representations in relation to the home or the care the child receives and how any such complaint or representations will be dealt with; and ensure that the views of each relevant person are taken into account, so far as reasonably practicable, before making a decision about the care or welfare of a child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(iii)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's views about the care they receive, particularly following incidents and the use of restraint, are gained.	29 November 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose;	29 November 2025

that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)(b)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they complete and document the process of deciding whether the provision is suitable for a child to access, including how their overall needs can be met. In addition, the registered person must ensure that they document their consideration of different children spending time at the provision together.	
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; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children have a personal emergency evacuation plan.	29 November 2025
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.	29 November 2025

(Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))

In particular, ensure a copy of the statement of purpose is updated to show information about staffing and opening times.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure they communicate effectively with and share all relevant information about children's stays with parents and carers. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the environment is well maintained. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the scuffed bedroom walls are decorated and that the protective covering of the television is only used when absolutely necessary. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. In particular, this refers to not writing information in the first-person narrative if it is not the child's actual words. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: SC004085

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Diverse Abilities Plus Ltd.

Registered provider address: The Beehive Centre, 13–15 Manor Avenue, Poole BH12 4LB

Responsible individual: Claire Stacey

Registered manager: Amiee Barnett

Inspector

Carla Simkiss, Social Care Inspector

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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

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