

SC005041

Registered provider: Caretech Community Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. It provides care for up to eight children with a range of disabilities and complex needs.

The registered manager left the home in February 2025, and the provider is recruiting for the post. The home is currently managed by an interim manager with oversight from senior managers.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 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: 30 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2024	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
13/12/2021	Full	Good
12/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy positive relationships with the adults who care for them. Due to the children's complex needs, most were unable to verbally communicate their views about where they live. During the inspection, staff were observed providing sensitive, nurturing care, resulting in children being happy in the home. Two children told the inspectors that they like where they live.

Staff understand children's different communication needs. Many of the children do not use verbal communication, but staff can interpret their body language to determine their needs. When children have limited verbal communication, speech is encouraged, and staff were observed sensitively supporting children in getting across what they were trying to communicate. This good support enables children to express their choices and feel heard.

Children attend education regularly and are making good progress. When children are not attending school, staff support them with educational activities in the home. They follow guidance from education professionals and allocate time each day to work towards goals outlined in the child's education, health and care plan.

Children's health needs are met to a high standard. Many of the children have complex health needs as well as learning disabilities, and staff are well trained to meet a wide variety of needs. Staff ensure that children attend numerous health appointments to maintain their well-being. One child has recently undergone significant spinal surgery, and staff were on hand to support them in hospital and to follow their recovery plan. The child has made significant progress since the operation, which is in part due to the support provided by staff to promote his walking as much as possible at home.

Children do not routinely take part in activities outside of the home, and activities in the home can also be repetitive. Many children nap every afternoon, even if it is not part of their care plan. This has become a habit, which is reducing the time children spend engaging in stimulating activities. In addition to visiting a farm and going on a holiday, managers have engaged with children and are planning a trip to Blackpool. Regular local activities do not counterbalance these big trips, as children rarely leave the home during weekends and school holidays. This limits children's opportunities to engage in their local community, to have new experiences, and to pursue hobbies and interests outside of the home.

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

Children's safety is a priority for managers and staff. Many of the children have specialist equipment, which is well maintained and serviced regularly. Staff receive training in areas including percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy feeding, manual handling and seizure management. This helps to keep very vulnerable children safe.

Behaviour is well managed, and incidents of physical intervention are very rare. There has only been one incident since the last inspection, and this was handled well by trained staff. One child exhibits self-injurious behaviour, which is well managed, and staff adhere to the child's plans to keep them safe. When injuries occur, staff ensure that the child receives the medical attention they require, but this is not always clearly recorded.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and know how to keep children safe. Any concerns raised about staff practice are taken seriously by managers. Managers thoroughly investigate concerns, collaborating effectively with other professionals when necessary.

Staff manage medication effectively. Only trained staff administer medication to children. On one occasion, a child's medication had run out, and they went four days before they had more. This issue was not escalated, nor was medical advice sought. This was an isolated incident and did not affect the child's health. All other medication was given as prescribed.

Staff recruitment is carried out safely. All required checks are undertaken, and staff receive a comprehensive induction to ensure that only suitable people care for vulnerable children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is currently being managed by an interim manager, with senior managers providing additional oversight. The previous manager has only recently left and was well respected by staff. She was very experienced in caring for disabled children and was committed to providing them with good care.

Staff speak positively about managers, and they feel supported in their roles. The recent introduction of specific team meetings for night staff has helped them feel more included. Although staff generally receive regular supervision, some have not received the level of supervision that the provider requires. This issue has since improved, and all staff have received supervision in recent months.

There are some good-quality monitoring systems in place, which help managers to review the quality of care in the home. However, monitoring has failed to identify inaccuracies and missing updates in children's documents. For example, one child underwent surgery that significantly changed their needs, but some of their plans were not updated to reflect the changes. This did not have an adverse effect on the child's health and recovery, but inaccurate information in children's plans may lead to children not receiving the correct care.

Overall, communication with professionals and children's families is very positive. There was one isolated incident where the home faced challenges in collaborating with other professionals. This led to some tension, which is currently being addressed. All other

feedback from professionals and families is very positive, and all those consulted were confident that children are safe and well cared for.

The home's statement of purpose has not been updated to reflect staff changes. Additionally, it does not contain accurate information about equipment in 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(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 enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child's interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences; and make a positive contribution to the home and the wider community; and that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	24 April 2025
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	24 April 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. (Regulation 16 (1))	24 April 2025

This requirement is restated.	
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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: SC005041

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Caretech Community Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Vicky Smith, Social Care Inspector
Kirsty Truesdale, Social Care Inspector

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