

SC025940

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a national charity. It is registered to provide care for up to four children with learning difficulties.

There are two managers registered for this home. One is currently undertaking a senior leadership role within the organisation. The other manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024 and currently has day-to-day responsibility for the home.

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

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 February 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: 12 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2023	Full	Good
31/10/2022	Full	Good
18/01/2022	Full	Good
19/02/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their starting points. Children who have complex needs benefit from having caring staff who know them well and are attuned to their individual needs. Care is taken to ensure children's day-to-day routines are consistent and that children know what will be happening throughout the day. Staff are aware of children's backgrounds and how best to support them. This promotes a sense of stability and well-being for the children.

Children feel valued and loved. They live in a warm, welcoming and brightly decorated home. There are plentiful pictures and a tree of memories on proud display, which captures key events of the children's lives.

Children enjoy living at this home and engage in a variety of activities both in the home and local community. Care is taken to discover children's interests and talents. Some of the children love music. Staff play children's favourite tunes and encourage children to express themselves by dancing. Children enjoy playing on the swings, trampoline, slide and table tennis in the large garden. This helps develop their social and life skills.

Children use a well-equipped sensory room. They engage in activities that support their individual learning. Staff are creative and use aromatic plants to stimulate children's senses and encourage their interactions with nature.

Children have key-work sessions, where they learn practical life skills. Staff use a variety of methods to gather children's views and share information with children, including pictorial aids. This helps to enhance children's participation in these sessions. As a result, children steadily increase in confidence. One child loves doing laundry, and ably carries out this task. Another child now sits at the table and uses cutlery.

Staff prioritise children's health and educational needs. Where children are not receiving education, staff advocate for them and ensure that they complete online learning until a school placement is found. Leaders and managers are aware of how children present, and they are professionally curious when changes occur. They advocate for and work with other professionals to ensure that children receive the right support.

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

Children are safe in this home. When incidents occur, they are managed well. Staff build trusting relationships with the children, which helps them to support children who become distressed. Staff are curious to discover the reasons for children's responses and are keen to ensure that children's personalities are understood.

Children's behaviour support plans further enhance staff's ability to understand the triggers which have an influence on how children react. Staff respond to these

appropriately, using effective de-escalation techniques, as they are attuned to each individual child. Children express their wishes and feelings following incidents, which staff ensure informs their responses to children.

Physical intervention is not used often in this home. When needed, this is used to prevent children from harming themselves or others. The manager reviews the incidents and identifies and actions areas for further development.

Children understand how to stay safe and recognise risks. There are discussions in children's meetings, for example, about first aid and what to do if they have an injury, such as a cut to the hand. Children also learn about their bodies and the importance to note changes. They share information with staff and receive support with these issues.

Children enjoy spending time in the local area. The manager completes a local area assessment, which includes strategies to keep children safe when spending time in the community. Partner agencies are not consulted with as part of this process, and this therefore limits the broader evaluation of risk.

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

Leaders and managers are ambitious for the children. They know children well and have formed trusting relationships with them.

The registered manager is child focused and a positive role model for staff, who hold the support she provides in high regard. Changes in management and senior leadership for the home has, however, impacted on staff morale and created a sense of instability in the team. Staff use team meetings to raise these concerns, and the responsible individual ensures that the senior leadership team is aware of these. Steps are being taken to rebuild trust and confidence in the senior leadership arrangements.

Team meetings take place on a regular basis and are well attended. This provides a good opportunity for staff to collaboratively talk about children's care and their work practice.

Leaders and managers are keen to continually improve the service provided for children and staff. They are taking steps to implement clinical supervision for staff and a therapeutic model of care offered to children. These practices are not yet embedded. There is no workforce development plan in place to show how leaders and managers intend to support staff's ongoing training and continuing professional development.

While leaders and managers are keen to develop the service, they have not taken effective action to address all requirements from previous inspections. In particular, staff supervision and appraisal require further improvement. Staff do not consistently receive regular supervision. Some members of staff have not received supervision for several months. This, coupled with the changes in management, has led to some staff feeling unsupported.

Safer recruitment checks for staff are undertaken by managers. However, the oversight and accessibility of the documentation is challenging for senior managers. Important information regarding the suitability of staff employed within the home is not easily accessible. The cumbersome database where staff records are kept makes it difficult to access recruitment records when required.

Leaders and managers have ensured that there are quality assurance processes in place to support management oversight of the home. However, these do not assist leaders and managers to identify and address all shortfalls. There are gaps in the oversight of children's care plans and supervision records. This leads to staff not having the most up-to-date information about children. There are missed opportunities for staff to discuss children's support and interventions.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development. receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	30 May 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's records are kept up to date.	30 May 2025
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	30 May 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they provide a homely, domestic environment. In particular, remove and repaint the peeled artwork in the children's rooms. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that a workforce development plan is in place that complies with the quality standards and includes the experience and qualifications of the leaders and staff team. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.8)

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: SC025940

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Registered provider address: Barnardo's, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Danielle Rebbitt

Registered managers: Wendy Madden and Pauline Lewin

Inspector

Angela Reid, Social Care Inspector

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