

SC034108

Registered provider: Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides long-term and short break care for up to six children who may have physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

One child was living at the home long term. Short breaks are currently being offered as specified in the home's statement of purpose. The inspector spoke with two children about their experiences of living in the home.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 October 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: 9 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/07/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/08/2023	Full	Good
12/10/2022	Full	Good
15/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide nurturing and well-planned care to children. Staff have a good understanding of each child's individual needs, preferences and communication styles. Care is tailored and responsive to children's needs. Staff are consistent in their approach to responding to children's differing presentations. This ensures children receive meaningful care.

Children are supported with dignity and sensitivity. Staff do not view disability as a barrier to progress or participation and actively promote inclusive practice to ensure that each child has the same access to experiences as their peers. Children are encouraged to explore, express themselves and develop at their own pace.

A range of communication tools are used effectively to support children's understanding and engagement. These include social stories that use images and talking books. Staff use these tools with skill and consistency, and this enables children to make sense of routines, transitions and expectations. This active approach to communication enhances children's autonomy and allows them to express themselves in a meaningful way.

Plans for children's moves in and out of the home are clear and well managed. Staff take particular care when supporting children with complex needs or specific conditions to ensure that transitions into and out of the home are smooth and well planned to meet children's physical and emotional needs. Plans are developed in consultation with families and professionals and are regularly reviewed to reflect children's evolving needs.

Short breaks are a valued aspect of the service and have a clear, positive impact on children's well-being. They offer opportunities for rest, play and social interaction, while also providing essential respite for families. Feedback from parents and professionals is consistently positive. This highlights the quality of care, the professionalism of staff and the difference the service makes to family life.

Staff have decorated the home with photos and pictures of children to make the home look nicer and bright. However, the home is in need of significant updating, and the provider has commenced with plans for a purpose-built home that will meet the needs of looked-after children and children accessing short breaks care.

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

Staff understand children's individual risks, needs and protective factors. There is a clear ethos of safeguarding in the home and staff prioritise children's safety and emotional well-being. Concerns are escalated appropriately, and records show timely action and effective follow through. Risk assessments are detailed and updated as circumstances change.

Physical intervention is used only as a last resort, and staff are trained to de-escalate situations using calm and child-centred approaches. When holds do occur, they are proportionate and documented well. However, one recent incident highlighted the need for strengthened management oversight in this area, as staff involved in incidents are not spoken to separately.

Pre-admission planning is thorough and risk informed. Children live and stay in the home safely, with careful consideration given to peer dynamics and individual vulnerabilities. This proactive approach minimises the potential for conflict and ensures that children's needs are met in a stable and secure environment.

Staff contribute meaningfully to statutory meetings, offering insights that reflect their close working relationships with children. Team updates are shared routinely to support consistent care and ensure that all staff are informed of emerging risks and developments. However, team meetings would benefit from clearer documentation of individual staff contributions to strengthen accountability and evidence reflective practice.

Managers act swiftly when issues arise to prioritise children's and staff safety. Following recent incidents, practical safeguarding solutions, such as the introduction of bite proof hoodies and protective caps, have provided staff with measures to help them. This is a thoughtful approach to risk management.

Safeguarding practice is embedded across the service. Clear systems are in place to monitor and respond to safeguarding arrangements. These systems are well understood by staff and contribute to a home that feels safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers set clear expectations and lead by example. They are visible and their presence is purposeful with a strong emphasis on providing good standards of care. The recent appointment of an additional deputy manager has strengthened leadership capacity, enabling more consistent oversight and support across the home.

Monitoring systems are well established and used effectively to identify and address previous shortfalls. Managers respond swiftly to emerging issues and demonstrate a proactive approach to service improvement. This ensures that children's needs remain central even when navigating multi-agency arrangements for children with complex needs.

Staff receive regular supervision and report feeling well supported, particularly during periods of increased behavioural challenges. Additional support is provided when needed and leaders are responsive to the emotional demands placed on the team. Supervision sessions are variable in quality and not always evident of reflective practice. The manager is taking measures to improve this.

Open communication is embedded throughout the service. Staff feel confident that concerns will be heard and acted on and describe leaders as approachable, fair and committed to their well-being. This openness contributes to a positive team culture and supports retention and morale, and with staff changes being minimal, means that children have consistency.

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— 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; and 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; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	22 January 2026

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)(iv))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that the people who have used the measure are spoken to independently and that the records are clear.

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC034108

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Tameside One, Market Place, Ashton-under-Lyne OL6 6BH

Responsible individual: Jill Colbert

Registered manager: Karen Scase

Inspector

Colin Jones, Social Care Inspector

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