

SC035969

Registered provider: Liverpool City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides short breaks for up to seven children with physical and/or learning disabilities. Fifty-one children currently access the service.

At the time of this inspection, 4 children were staying overnight at the home. The inspector spent time with all children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023. She is appropriately experienced and qualified.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2026

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: 19 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2025	Full	Good
06/03/2024	Full	Good
14/03/2023	Full	Good
14/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive, caring and trusting relationships with staff. Staff know children well. They invest time in them and promote their well-being through nurturing practice. Staff are proud of the progress children have made and talk about their development with enthusiasm. Children make progress in a range of areas of their lives, including confidence building, independence skills, improved sleep patterns and accessing activities in the community. Their achievements are celebrated by the staff team and captured in their individualised 'My Journey' records.

Professionals and family are very complimentary about the quality of care and support provided to children. They reported on the positive impact of the service on their family stability and wellbeing. Families are supported to attend coffee mornings and home meetings to promote an inclusive working relationship.

Children's transitions to the service are well planned and taken at their pace, with the support of their family and placing authority. Staff promote consistent routines to help children to settle in. They share the benefits of these structures for children with their families. Each child has a detailed short break placement plan. This means that staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and preferred communication styles.

Children's health and medication are well monitored. Staff take prompt and appropriate action to respond to children who have epilepsy seizures. They have been trained in and understand the process for administering emergency rescue medication. Seizure care plans provide staff with clear guidance about the action they should take to support children during and post seizure.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are captured through weekly children's meetings and daily interaction with staff. Children are supported to share their views and to understand social situations through communication tools such as Picture Exchange Communication systems, Makaton and individual strategies using objects of reference. This has helped to develop children's confidence in their communication skills. Direct work with children links to their targets, goals and aspirations set out in their short break placement plan. This means that children are actively supported to develop their skills and independence.

All children are supported to attend school as part of their routines and overnight stays. Out of school, children have fun with staff and their peers during their stays. They attend a range of recreational activities, and some children have enjoyed a short break in a caravan. An online photo and comments system is used to capture children's memories, to take home with them and to enable their families to share their experiences.

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

Children are safe and secure during their stays in the home. Children's risk assessments and individual support plans provide staff with the information they require, including risk reduction strategies to work with children and to keep them safe. Consequently, staff understand children's risks, triggers to their behaviour and how to best support them.

Children are praised for positive behaviour and encouraged to make safe choices. Children are given space and time to do their own things so that there is minimal impact on each other when accessing the service. Children are also supported to be kind and respectful to one another, to ensure that a bullying culture does not develop.

Low-level behaviour is well recorded by staff. It demonstrates that children's safety is paramount. Staff use their knowledge of children to de-escalate situations and to prevent children's behaviour escalating further. Consequently, there has been no use of restraints with children.

Staff record all incidents of self-injury, accidents or bruising. They share the records with the relevant professionals and children's families to ensure that there is full transparency. Staff routinely check children for bruising and injuries as part of children's admission for their short break and again on them returning home. A 2-way process between staff and children's families ensures that any new marks on children are fully explored and accounted for to keep the child safe.

There has been no allegations or disclosures in relation to the care and safety of children. The staff team knows how to raise safeguarding concerns without delay and how to escalate concerns with the appropriate safeguarding professionals to ensure that children are safeguarded. There have equally been no complaints made by children, families or professionals. However, there are clear processes in place for children and others to raise their concerns.

Portable appliance testing was overdue at the home. This had been chased by the senior leadership team without success. Leaders and managers escalated this during the inspection and arranged for the tests to be undertaken the day after the inspection. The manager provided evidence of these having been conducted after the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers understand children's needs, the progress they make and areas that they require support in to benefit their life opportunities. They are positive role models for both children and staff. They advocate for children to ensure that they are achieving their potential. The manager promotes collaborative multi-agency working to improve children's care and experiences during their stays.

There is a stable and qualified staff team that provides continuity of support and care for children. The manager has a good oversight of her staff team and their individual

development. She effectively monitors their practice and provides clear guidance about expected staff conduct. The manager is proactive in sourcing additional in-depth courses for staff to meet children's needs, such as autism and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder training. Some of this training requires rolling out to the wider staff team.

Staff engage in regular practice-related supervisions. Appraisals and probationary reviews are conducted with staff to ensure that their professional development is monitored and they are provided with the support they require. Staff feel very well supported by the senior team. They enjoy their roles and this was reflected in their interaction with the children.

The manager uses team meetings to carry out creative activities, developmental work and scenario-based quizzes with the staff team to enhance their knowledge and understanding of children. Additional staff workshops are conducted to address the staff team's broader learning and to improve their skill set. This has included workshops focused on children's communication styles and understanding children's complex needs.

Since the last inspection, the independent person has made several visits when they have not spent time with children. On some occasions, visits have been conducted while children have been in school. This is a missed opportunity for someone independent to spend time with children to make a balanced assessment of how children are cared for and supported during their stays.

The manager's review of the quality of care report does not consistently include children's and professionals' feedback about the impact of the service. In addition, it does not always provide a clear evaluation of the care provided to children. This was a requirement at the last inspection and so it has been restated. However, the manager ensures that she oversees all records and systems. Internal audits also ensure that all case files and placing authority records are kept up to date with children's key information.

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
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a)) Specifically, the independent person should consistently spend time with children during their visits, to enable them to make a balanced assessment of how children are cared for and supported during their stays.	23 April 2026
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c) (5)) Specifically, the report should include children's and professionals' feedback about the impact of the service and a clear evaluation about the quality of care provided to children. This was a requirement at the last inspection and so it has been restated.	23 April 2026

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: SC035969

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Liverpool City Council

Registered provider address: Liverpool City Council, Cunard Building, Water Street, Liverpool L3 1AH

Responsible individual: Peter Murphy

Registered manager: Susan Robins

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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