

SC044880

Registered provider: Brighton and Hove City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides short breaks and longer-term care for children aged between 8 and 18. According to its statement of purpose, the children have severe or moderate levels of learning disabilities, as defined in their education, health and care plans.

At the time of the inspection, 4 children were staying at the home for short breaks. Two children and one young adult live long term in accommodation separate to that used for short breaks.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2013.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 July 2025

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
21/07/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/04/2025	Full	Inadequate
16/04/2024	Full	Good
16/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

Since the last full inspection, the home has continued to improve the care and support children receive. Children are making good progress, and parents and professionals say this is because staff care for them well. Staff also feel positive about the leadership and management of the home, and how these have helped the home improve. However, some important areas still need work to ensure there is consistency in how children are helped and protected. This includes clearer incident recording, a review of restraint practice and follow-on support after incidents, and ensuring support plans match children's needs and are always followed by staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress from their starting points. One child, who previously found socialising difficult, is now interacting with other children in the home and taking part in a variety of activities they enjoy. Another child has grown more confident in using their communication device. As a result, children are noticeably happier and more self-assured.

Children's health needs are met and understood. Staff work with specialist health professionals and follow the relevant plans. All the children have hospital passports that are detailed and aligned to their needs. As a result, children receive safe, well-coordinated care that protects their health and promotes their overall wellbeing.

Children are supported to engage in education. Staff advocate for children when the education they are receiving is not aligned to their needs. As a result, children are better able to access learning and benefit from education tailored to their circumstances.

Children's views are listened to and taken seriously. Staff keep track of what children say about the service to make sure they have good experiences. For example, one child said they had not made any friends during their stays. Staff then arranged for them to attend at the same time as another child with similar interests. As a result, the child was able to start a new friendship.

Children take part in a range of activities that match their interests. This helps them to stay engaged, build confidence and enjoy their time in the home.

Children are supported to maintain relationships with their family. Staff promote and facilitate time with children's families in line with each child's care plan, for example they support family members with transport when needed. This helps children sustain important connections that contribute to their sense of identity.

Children are well supported when they leave the home. Staff give emotional reassurance and maintain good communication with children, parents and professionals so that each move is planned and goes smoothly. For example, when a young person recently moved, staff used social stories to help them understand what would happen and to prepare for the change. This helps children to have safe, well-organised transitions that lower their anxiety and support their ongoing stability.

The home is clean and safe. However, some areas need renovation and redecoration so that the environment feels more homely and less like an institution.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Incidents are not always recorded well. Some records are unclear, and the steps staff use to calm or de-escalate situations are not always written down. This makes it hard to fully understand what happened and how the situation was managed. As a result, important learning can be missed, and opportunities to improve practice and keep children safe may not be fully used.

When physical restraints take place, they are mostly well managed. However, on one occasion staff did not use an appropriate method in line with the home's statement of purpose. Additionally, managers do not speak to staff and children following restraints to review what happened. As a result, managers cannot be assured that the measures used are safe and appropriate.

Management oversight is recorded after each incident. However, it does not identify what needs to improve or how staff practice should change when required. As a result, staff are not always receiving the guidance they need to learn from incidents.

Children's support plans show children's key strengths and clearly explain how they should be supported. However, the plans are not always updated when children show new behaviours. In addition, staff do not always follow the support plans. This means children may not receive the right support at the right time.

Children are supported by staff who have built positive and trusting relationships with them. This is shown through the warm and caring interactions they share. Staff encourage children in a calm and consistent way.

Allegations about staff are taken seriously and managed well, with clear action plans. Managers consult with the local authority designated officer when required. This ensures risks are managed properly and children are protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, the registered manager remains absent. The interim manager continues to be in post and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Leaders and managers understand the home's strengths and areas that need improvement. The interim manager shows reflective leadership and is committed to raising standards. Because of this, staff feel more involved and are more focused on giving children good-quality care.

Staff feel supported by leaders and managers, describing them as approachable. They report that the interim manager has brought positive changes to the home, which has led to improvements in staff practice and staff morale. One staff member said, 'I feel like a lot has changed for the better.' As a result, staff feel the home is moving in a positive and more stable direction.

Staff receive regular supervision; however, there was a period when this did not take place consistently in line with the organisation's policy. The interim manager recognises this, stating that this was mainly during a time of staff role changes.

Staff are up to date with the training they need. Managers keep an overview of all staff training, and monthly checks are carried out to make sure everyone stays up to date. When needed, staff are sent reminders to encourage them to complete or attend their training. This means staff have the knowledge and skills to support children, which improves the quality of care children receive.

Feedback from external professionals and parents is mostly positive. Communication with the home is mostly described as 'very good' by parents and professionals. One parent, who previously provided mixed feedback at the last inspection, now speaks highly of staff and the care their child receives. This shows that leaders and staff are working hard to improve the service and build trust with families and professionals.

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 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff consistently follow children's support plans and that these plans are updated when new behaviours emerge so they remain relevant to each child's needs, to continue to keep children safe. In particular, the registered person must ensure that restraint practice used is in line with the home's statement of purpose. In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff record incidents well and that management oversight of incidents identifies and addresses shortfalls in staff practice so that good-quality care is maintained. This requirement has been reinstated from the last inspection.	5 October 2026
The registered person must ensure that—	5 October 2026

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— details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use 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 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)(ii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i)) In particular, ensure prompt attention to areas of the home needing renovation, redecoration or repair and provide a homely environment.	2 November 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should maintain good employment practice as set out in regulations 31 to 33. They must ensure that line management supervision takes place consistently in line with the organisation’s policy to support staff development and performance management. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: SC044880

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brighton and Hove City Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Norton Road, Hove BN3 3BQ

Responsible individual: Lorraine Hughes

Registered manager: Karen Rusbridge

Interim manager: Rebecca Thomas

Inspectors

Chido Mangava, Social Care Inspector

Kerry Meller-Rayment, 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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