

SC058778

Registered provider: Peterborough City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority and provides short breaks for up to five children at any one time and long-term care for a further three children. The home provides specialist care for children with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities and/or sensory impairments.

At the time of this inspection, five children were at the home.

The registered manager left in March 2025. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 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: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/07/2024	Full	Good
12/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/07/2022	Full	Good
13/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home currently supports a total of 17 children. Two of these children receive care under shared care arrangements. Five children were seen during the inspection. The children are settled and comfortable at the home. The staff know them well and understand their individual needs and communication styles.

Parents are positive about the support offered. They feel that the staff know the children well and keep them updated about their children's stays. Staff support parents with tasks, including attending hospital appointments and liaising with other professionals when required.

Staff support children to take part in activities. There are a mix of activities at the home and in the community. Some staff have completed lifeguard qualifications and can take children swimming weekly. A new larger TV and streaming services are accessible for children to watch a range of films and programmes. Children enjoy activities, including walks, visiting cafes and arts and crafts.

Children's views are not routinely gained. Consultation with children does not take place regularly. When one child raised some concerns, there was a delay in staff responding to the child. Staff do not have conversations with children about topical or relevant subjects to support their development and awareness. This means that opportunities to educate and support children and gain their views are being missed.

Children do not have clear targets. Staff understand children's needs but there are no clear goals to work towards. A new system is being implemented and introduced but is not yet being used. This means that the staff are not yet supporting children to make progress in line with their abilities and in relevant areas.

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

Incidents are infrequent and there have been no restraints. A new incident tracker gives a clear view of any concerns and the actions taken. The tracker is used to identify any patterns or trends. Professionals and parents are updated promptly about any concerns or incidents.

Safer recruitment processes are followed for new members of staff. Temporary staff are not used because there is a stable staff team. This enables children to build relationships with staff who work at the home.

Medication errors are rare. Staff oversee a lot of medication due to children's health needs. There have been four medication errors since last inspection. These are identified through regular medication checks. However, advice from medical professionals is not

always sought when errors are identified. This could mean children's health needs are not fully supported.

Appropriate actions are taken by managers when allegations are made against staff members. Referrals to the local authority designated officer are made promptly and investigations are undertaken. However, there have been two delays in safeguarding concerns being reported. For one staff member, there is no recorded conversation about this delay to ensure they are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. An action from an investigation regarding additional safeguarding training has not been met. The staff member has not yet completed the identified training. This could mean that staff are not able to develop their understanding of important safeguarding responsibilities.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted. He is committed and aspirational for the home. The manager is aware of the areas for development and is starting to introduce new systems and ways of working. The manager has introduced new incident forms, which include management oversight. These new systems are still being embedded but appear to be having a positive impact so far.

Staff spoken to were positive about the support they receive. The manager is keen to upskill staff and has allocated new areas of responsibility to staff. This supports staff development and increases the support being offered to children and families.

Professionals speak positively about the home. They feel staff understand the children's needs and work well with the families. Communication with professionals is strong and all incident reports and details are sent to social workers. Staff attend meetings about children to ensure they are up to date.

Staff supervision sessions take place regularly. The manager has recently changed the supervision forms to be more reflective and discuss the children in more detail. Appraisals take place with staff. However, there is no feedback from professionals, colleagues or children as part of these appraisals. This limits staff's ability to reflect on their practice and identify areas for development.

Recording and reporting is a known area for development. The manager has provided support to staff around this area in supervision sessions and team meetings. However, there are some incident reports which do not fully detail the actions taken by staff and some children's plans are inconsistent. This could mean that staff do not have clear guidance to follow to best support children.

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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff understand and follow safeguarding procedures and report concerns in a timely manner and that actions from any investigations are completed promptly.	5 December 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; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that all records are written in detail and that actions taken by staff during incidents are recorded.	19 December 2025

The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—

mutual respect and trust;

an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and

positive responses to other children and adults.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that staff—

meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;

help each child to develop socially aware behaviour;

encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;

communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding;

help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; and

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii))

In particular, staff should use opportunities to support children to develop their understanding and awareness of topics, and children should also have clear targets that staff support them to achieve.

30 January 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are given opportunities to regularly express their views and are made aware of outcomes after sharing their views to show how these are listened to and acted on where possible. ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol and the child's prescription. Where there are errors with administering medication, medical advice should be sought to ensure children's safety. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, when reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: SC058778

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Sand Martin House, Bittern Way, Peterborough PE2 8TY

Responsible individual: Anita Hewson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Leanne Lyon, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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