

SC059842

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority short-break service is registered to provide care for up to 5 children. The home provides planned short-break care for children with severe learning disabilities who may also have additional healthcare needs arising from physical and sensory impairments.

The home was registered with Ofsted in 2004 and the manager registered with Ofsted in October 2022.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 January 2026

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected	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: 3 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/12/2024	Full	Good
14/02/2024	Full	Good
23/03/2023	Full	Good
22/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported by a well-informed and consistent staff team that strives to ensure that children have fun during their stays at the home. Children enjoy spending time with each other and participate in a range of activities such as sensory play, bowling and trips on an adapted barge boat. These opportunities help children to develop their confidence and social skills.

Introductions to the home are structured and planned at a pace suitable for children and their families. The staff meet with a variety of professionals and visit children at their schools to get to know them and gather information to inform their plans. This provides staff with an understanding of children's individual needs. This considered approach means that children only stay at the home when it is in their best interests to do so and the manager is assured that the child's needs can be met.

Gathering children's views, wishes and feelings to inform their stay is a strength at the home. Staff communicate with all children using their preferred methods of communication and are committed to promoting inclusion and participation. One child has been involved in the interviewing of staff, while other children act as advocates for their peers.

Children are supported to understand the world around them through methods that are appropriate to their age and understanding. There is good use of communication tools and social stories to support children's understanding of events.

The home is specially adapted to meet the needs of disabled children. It has suitable tracking systems, an adapted bath and new adapted beds. Children have access to various resources, including an outdoor sensory garden, an indoor sensory light room and other specialised equipment.

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

Positive and respectful behaviour is encouraged. The staff are skilled at supporting children and do not use physical intervention unless it is as a last resort to keep children safe. However, the records are not always signed by the staff involved and the intervention used is sometimes unclear.

The staff team is experienced, skilled and trained in meeting the children's complex health needs. Staff have completed a variety of training specific to each individual child's needs and are trained to manage and safely administer medication safely to children.

Children's plans are completed in line with key documents such as education, health and care plans, and are mostly personalised, detailed and regularly reviewed. However, not

all plans detail the author or accurately record the dates that plans were implemented and reviewed. A requirement has been restated for this.

Risk assessments do not consider all known risks for children and are not accurately reviewed following incidents. One child's risk plan does not contain information for staff to support their allergy, and another did not reflect behaviour management strategies for staff to follow during incidents of behaviour that challenge. This does not support staff to keep children safe.

Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment processes, ensuring that only staff who are safe to do so support children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is supported by an experienced and qualified manager who has high aspirations for the children and staff. The manager has effective working relationships with the local authority, parents, professionals and schools.

Parents and professionals spoke highly about the staff team and the difference the support makes to the lives of their children. One parent said, 'If I had to sum up [name of the home] I would say they are all exemplary.'

Staff are supported with regular practice-related supervision. Reflective team meetings take place, which help staff to complete their roles effectively. Staff say they feel supported by the manager and work well as a team.

The manager is committed to staff development and ensures that all staff have access to a range of training that supports their care of the children. This provides staff with the knowledge and skills they need to meet each child's individual needs.

The manager has good oversight of practice in the home. He monitors and evaluates children's records and provides reflective practice opportunities and support for staff to improve their practice. However, there are shortfalls in the manager's oversight, as some areas identified during the inspection had not been previously recognised.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all risks, when identified, are clearly recorded in the child's risk assessment and care plan and that any risks identified have control measures in place to support staff in keeping children safe.	6 March 2026
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.	6 March 2026

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)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that effective monitoring and review systems are used to identify shortfalls and make continuous improvements in the quality of care for children.	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the behaviour management policy”) which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children’s home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. 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— a description of the measure and its duration; the name of the person who used the measure (“the user”), and of any other person present when the measure was used; 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 signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)(ii) (2) (3)(a)(iv)(vi)(b)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that a description of any measure used to support children is recorded and that all staff involved sign the records to confirm its accuracy.	6 March 2026

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; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's plans are updated regularly, contain accurate information to support children and are signed and dated by the author.	6 March 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: SC059842

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Victoria Square, PO Box 29, Bolton BL1 1RU

Responsible individual: Paul Rankin

Registered manager: Neil Haydock

Inspector

Kelly McCurdy, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2026