

SC062013

Registered provider: After Care (Northwest) Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned managed by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home and were spoken to by the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2025.

Inspection date: 24 February 2026

Date of last inspection: 7 April 2025

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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.'

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

An assurance inspection was carried out in response to specific concerns notified to Ofsted following a complaint. The inspector evaluated the impact on children and reviewed the actions taken by leaders and staff.

Children have positive, trusting relationships with staff who know them well. They enjoy taking part in a variety of activities together both inside and outside of the home. This helps children build and maintain meaningful relationships with staff.

One child lived at the home for a short period. Leaders and managers responded quickly when behaviours that were previously unknown caused strain between children's relationships. This had a negative impact on one child. Leaders and managers explored options with the child's placing authority to stabilise the child's placement. However, to safeguard the other two children, this child moved on from the home in an unplanned way.

Staff did not follow the child's individual safety plans or the home's reporting procedures after an incident of self-harm. The manager responded with a comprehensive investigation and informed external safeguarding professionals appropriately. The manager has taken steps to strengthen staff practice through additional training and structured workshops. Staff knowledge is now routinely checked in team meetings and supervision to ensure that everyone is clear about their responsibilities.

Staff now demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in responding to safeguarding concerns. Staff confidently describe the actions they would take across a range of safeguarding scenarios they may face when caring for children. Their practice is supported by detailed safety plans and assessments that set out clear actions that staff should take when safeguarding concerns arise. These improvements are effective in keeping children safe.

Staff now respond quickly to incidents of self-harm. Staff seek medical attention appropriately and complete necessary bedroom searches to remove items that may pose a risk to children's safety. Staff are helping children to understand difficult emotions and are providing positive strategies to manage these.

Staff attend a range of training, including specific courses tailored to the children's individual needs. However, two staff are outside of the providers timescales for completing mandatory refresher training. Dates have been booked, and one staff member attended their refresher training on the day of this inspection. A recommendation has been implemented.

The requirement previously issued under Regulation 6 and the previous recommendation were not reviewed during this visit. For this reason, they are restated. A requirement under Regulation 12 has been implemented.

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/04/2025	Full	Good
29/10/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/04/2023	Full	Good
26/04/2022	Full	Good

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
In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi))	24 March 2026
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vi)) Specifically, that plans are made and implemented in a timely way to ensure that children have the necessary skills for when they move out of the home. The plans should align with the child's needs and abilities and children should be encouraged to consistently build on their skills.	24 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that any sanctions used to address behaviour that challenges the adults are restorative in nature. This is to support children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them, and the wider community. Where appropriate, children should be

supported to make reparation to anyone affected by their behaviour. Staff should be skilled and confident in helping the child understand this and in guiding them through any restorative or reparative actions. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46-47, paragraph 9.38)

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their ongoing training; including ensuring that mandatory refresher training is provided within timescales. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC062013

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: After Care (Northwest) Limited

Registered provider address: After Care (Northwest) Limited, 45 Kensington Road, Southport PR9 0RT

Responsible individual: Timothy Blundell

Registered manager: Gemma Tidy

Inspector

Leanne Carr, Social Care Inspector

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