

SC064027

Registered provider: Delam Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a private organisation. The home provides care for up to six children with diagnosed learning disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2024. She is working towards a level 5 diploma in leadership and management in residential care.

Five children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The inspection started on 4 March 2025. The inspector returned on 11 March 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with 'Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence' policy.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 March and 11 March 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 23 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2023	Full	Good
14/03/2023	Full	Good
02/09/2021	Full	Good
04/03/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The overall experiences and progress of children are compromised by shortfalls in safeguarding practice and the leadership and management of the home.

The home needs some repair work, including replacing some radiator covers and touching up paintwork. However, children's bedrooms are personalised, and they have plenty of storage space for their personal possessions. There is a relaxed and welcoming atmosphere in the home.

Children enjoy spending time engaging in different activities, including riding bikes, arts, and crafts, playing the guitar, walking, watching television and listening to music. Children have access to a range of different resources, including swinging chairs, a sensory room and garden.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are explored and encouraged in different ways, including children's meetings and 'listen to me' sessions. Children's meetings are inclusive and use various communication methods to ensure all children are able to participate.

Children are supported to spend time with their friends and family. Staff maintain good communication with children's families. This provides children with a support network where they feel safe to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. One family member said, 'Staff supported [name of child] to attend my wedding.' Another parent said, '[Name of child]'s communication to siblings and us has improved.'

The staff are caring and passionate about their role and the care they provide to children. Some staff have been working at the home for a considerable length of time. Therefore, the children have built trusting relationships with staff.

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

Safeguarding processes are not always followed correctly. On one occasion, a safeguarding incident was not adequately investigated and followed up. This compromised safeguarding practice. The staff did share this information with senior leaders in the manager's absence, however, leaders and managers failed to ensure that this was effectively investigated and concluded. This is a significant shortfall that could compromise the safety and welfare of the children.

Staff access informative training to ensure that they are suitably trained to meet the individual needs of children. Training includes autism awareness, epilepsy awareness, understanding attachment, harmful sexual behaviour, and self-harm. This also helps to ensure consistency in staff practice.

Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort to keep children safe, after all de-escalation and distraction methods have been explored. Debriefs are completed with staff and children. Reflections with children are carried out using child-friendly and colourful resources to encourage engagement.

Safer recruitment processes are followed, which means that staff are recruited safely. Recruitment checks ensure that only suitable staff are employed to work with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager has recently returned to the home following maternity leave. During the manager's absence, management oversight was provided by an operations manager and a manager from another home. There has been a period of ineffective management oversight of staff practice, and the quality of care provided to children. This significantly compromised children's welfare and safety.

There is no demonstrated learning from safeguarding incidents. On one occasion, there was limited reflection with staff and no robust evaluation of a safeguarding incident, to improve the safety and welfare of children and the practice of staff. The management oversight of incident records is not consistent and lacks effective evaluation, resulting in very limited learning from incidents.

The independent person carries out regular visits to the home, however, reports could be strengthened with more rigorous monitoring. This is a missed opportunity to help leaders and managers to identify and address areas for development.

There are gaps in leaders and managers' overall monitoring and review systems. This does not support the manager to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. However, the manager has recently implemented a system to support and improve the monitoring of incidents and ensure consistency of practice.

Staff are supported through regular supervision, team meetings and reflective learning sessions. One staff member said, 'The staff are all supported by the manager and the teamwork is tremendous. Supervisions take place once a month, which is extremely beneficial for the staff team to make sure our voices are heard.'

Staff receive annual appraisals. However, appraisals do not consider children's views or the views of professionals working with the member of staff. This is a missed opportunity for staff development.

Ofsted has not been notified of all serious incidents as required. This compromises the regulator's oversight of the home.

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)) The registered person must ensure that any concerns in relation to children in their care are investigated in line with their safeguarding procedures.	18 April 2025
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	18 April 2025

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)(f)(g)(i)(h)) The registered person must implement an effective monitoring system to ensure improved oversight and evaluation of significant events in the home.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	18 April 2025

The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5)) The registered person must ensure that the independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the quality of care being provided.	18 April 2025
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. Any damage should be quickly repaired. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that appraisals consider, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff

member over the year and of 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

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: SC064027

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Delam Care Limited

Registered provider address: Metropolitan House, 5th Floor, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Rebecca Corden

Inspector

Stacey Ilaboya, Social Care Inspector

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