

SC066072

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately operated. It is registered to provide care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection, all of whom were either seen or spoken with.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2025.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 June 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded

Date of last inspection: 20 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/05/2025	Full	Good
21/05/2024	Full	Good
27/06/2023	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Safeguarding practice is ineffective and children are not protected from harm. Specifically, staff are not provided with the necessary guidance to safely manage and reduce risks to children, including risks that children face online. Shortfalls in management oversight of incidents and allegations means that children have not been effectively safeguarded.

Children do not make consistently good progress. Staff do not implement boundaries or healthy routines for children, and staff find managing the dynamics between children in the home challenging. This directly affects the children, their relationships, welfare and engagement in education.

Senior leaders recognise the serious and widespread failings and have taken some responsive action. However, further improvements are needed to ensure that children are consistently kept as safe as possible.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children are not making good enough progress in education. One child's engagement with their learning has reduced, with poor sleep routines contributing to this. Another child's school attendance has declined since moving into the home. Staff introduce children to education and employment opportunities, but when children do not attend, they are not encouraged by staff to engage in alternative learning.

Children's moves into the home are not well planned. Managers are not assured that staff have the knowledge and skills to meet children's needs before they move in. Insufficient consideration is given to the potential change in dynamics between children and how to minimise the impact of this on new children and those already living in the home. In addition, managers and staff do not promote safe relationships, specifically when taking into account known factors, such as age, beliefs, vulnerability and risk.

Children's moves on from the home are not in line with their individual care plans. Difficulties in managing relationships between children has resulted in children experiencing a move on from the home sooner than expected. However, staff manage these moves sensitively.

Medication is not always stored safely. This has not had a negative impact on children's health to date and staff addressed this shortfall during the inspection, once it had been raised with them.

Children say that they have positive relationships with staff. One child said, 'The staff are the best thing about the home.' Staff are committed to building meaningful relationships with children. This helps children to feel valued.

Children's health needs are addressed promptly. Staff respond quickly when children show signs of illness or discomfort. Children receive support and education around sexual health matters when needed. This helps children to maintain good all-round health.

Staff help children to learn and develop life skills in a planned and purposeful way. Children are supported to understand and manage various important independence skills to help them to prepare for their futures.

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

Staff do not respond effectively to online safety risks affecting children. Safety measures, such as parental controls, are not used consistently. Staff do not have sufficient awareness or oversight of children's online activity. This limits the ability of staff to identify and respond to emerging risk. Consequently, one child was exposed to online abuse.

Restraint is not always used as a last resort to keep children safe. Staff have used non-approved restraint techniques and not applied all available strategies to prevent incidents from escalating. Managers have failed to identify any learning following their review of incidents involving restraint. This increases the risk of children being restrained unsafely.

Records of restraint incidents are not always clear, consistent or accurate. Managers have not consistently identified or addressed issues with staff practice. No action was taken to reduce the likelihood of similar issues reoccurring in the future and prevent harm and risk for children.

Children witness incidents involving other children, and staff have failed to explore the emotional impact of this on children. As a result, children have experienced emotional distress. Staff do not always help children to reflect on what has happened. Discussions with children following incidents do not focus on helping children to learn how they could manage their emotions and behaviours differently in future. This limits children's opportunities to understand their vulnerabilities and explore how to keep themselves safer.

Children's records do not consistently reflect the level of risk they are exposed to in the home. Records are not updated and do not accurately reflect children's increasing risks and vulnerabilities. This means that staff do not always have clear guidance on how to respond to keep children safe.

Managers do not respond to allegations effectively and investigations are not always timely. It is also not always clear how children receive feedback about concerns they raise. Repeated concerns raised by children do not result in increased scrutiny or action. This lack of management oversight does not identify whether staff practice is timely and safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Managers do not maintain effective oversight of the home. Risk assessments are not always updated appropriately, and incident records do not always provide a clear account of events. Managers do not consistently identify poor practice or address shortfalls promptly. This limits opportunities to improve staff practice or reduce risks affecting children.

Leaders and managers do not embed learning quickly. Improvements identified by external professionals are not actioned in a timely manner. Managers do not reflect on incidents and, therefore, learning is not put into practice.

Children are not consistently involved in decisions about their care. Staff do not always involve children when introducing measures intended to keep them safe. This reduces children's understanding of, and commitment to, agreed strategies. However, when children make requests, staff respond promptly.

Supervision sessions for staff do not consistently encourage or support reflective practice. Staff do not routinely discuss or reflect on children's progress, the quality of care provided and relationships with staff and other children. This limits opportunities for staff to develop their practice. Despite this, staff said they feel supported by managers.

The manager works effectively with other professionals. The manager communicates well and seeks support when difficult situations arise. Meetings to address issues are arranged promptly when required.

The manager maintains a welcoming and homely environment. Staff respond quickly to repair any damage. The home is well equipped with resources to support children's wellbeing. Children are encouraged to respect and care for their environment.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(vi))	2 August 2026
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	2 August 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.	2 August 2026

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(f)(h))	
The registered provider must prepare and implement a policy which— sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular— provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34 (1)(b) (2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that clear records are kept about any investigation into an allegation and that children are informed about the outcome of any investigation into an allegation they have made.	2 August 2026

* This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that when children are not participating in education, staff work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable, structured activities. ('Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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: SC066072

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Alison O'Donnell

Registered manager: Siobhan O'Connor

Inspectors

Vikki Thwaites, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Emma Gauden, Social Care Inspector

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