

SC068076

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to 2 children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2021.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 May 2026

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	requires improvement to be good
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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: 21 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: At the last inspection, in March 2026, Ofsted identified serious concerns in relation to the care and protection of children, the leadership and management of the home and the care planning for children. As a result, 3 compliance notices were served.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/08/2024	Full	Good
21/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/08/2021	Full	Good

Summary of findings

As part of this inspection, Ofsted reviewed the action taken to meet the steps in the compliance notices. The provider has taken responsive action to meet most of the steps in the compliance notices.

The responsible individual and managers have reflected on the findings of the last inspection and put some systems and processes in place to improve their oversight. These systems help them evaluate their decision-making and recognise the areas that require development. Leaders and managers have reviewed and improved systems to strengthen placement planning. Since then, the initial experiences for the child who has moved into the home are positive. However, this is a very short time frame, and therefore, it is difficult to review the impact of the improvements in other areas.

Despite the child making steady initial progress, the shortfalls identified at the inspection have limited the judgement of the overall quality of care provided. This is because effective safeguards are not fully embedded or tested.

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home, and no children have moved out. At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home. The child spoke with the inspector.

This is the child's first experience of living in residential care. The child's move into the home was carefully planned and child focused. The child visited the home and was involved in personalising their bedroom before they moved in. This helped them settle in quickly. The child said, 'I had a positive experience moving into the home. I feel well cared for.'

Staff talk to the child in a nurturing and compassionate manner, approaching the child thoughtfully and with sensitivity. Staff respond to the child with warmth and enthusiasm, providing the child with reassurance. However, staff do not always value the child's wishes. Staff have not arranged work experience, despite the child's interest in this area. This means that the opportunities to develop the child's interests and hobbies have been missed.

Staff encourage the child to learn new skills. As a result of staff's encouragement, the child has begun to make positive progress in developing their independence ready for adulthood. However, the child is not clear of the opportunities that may be available to them as they approach adulthood. The child does not have an advocate to help explore ways in which they could be supported with their future and individual needs.

Staff support the child in maintaining their physical and emotional health. Staff have registered the child with local health services. The child benefits from a helpful daily routine with a clear structure, which helps them feel well prepared to attend all their routine appointments. The home does not have in-house therapeutic provision, but staff and managers work effectively with other agencies to offer the child appropriate therapeutic support.

External professionals and family members are complimentary about the care that the staff provide. Professionals said that initial signs are that staff are confident and consistent in their care for the child.

The home has recently undergone extensive refurbishment. The child enjoys spending time with staff in thoughtfully furnished spaces.

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

The child has complex needs, with a history of going missing from home and behaviours linked to criminal activity. Staff have a very good understanding of the child's background. They have effective links with local support services and ensure that important information is shared with them promptly.

The staff provide the child with a high level of supervision and support to help reduce risks. However, before this inspection, significant changes had been made to the child's safety restrictions. Despite leaders and managers knowing that these changes would come into effect, the child's risk management plans were only updated during the inspection. This meant that some known risks had not been sufficiently considered. The child's risk management plans did not provide clear strategies to help manage these risks.

The measures to help the child communicate with staff when they are away from the home independently had not been organised in a timely way. This meant that the safety factors contributing to the child's safety were not in place.

Staff have not had to use physical intervention. However, they have recently asked for refresher training to help build their confidence to manage challenging situations and reduce their reliance on calling police to the home. Leaders and managers have not yet arranged this training.

On rare occasions, staff use consequences to help the child manage their behaviour. These consequences relate directly to the behaviour. This restorative and focused approach helps the child find alternative and safer ways to express themselves.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is led by a permanent qualified manager. She is supported by a committed staff team.

Leaders and managers have started to make some necessary changes. However, these changes have not yet been fully embedded into practice and need to be further tested.

Although leaders and managers have made some recent adjustments to the monitoring arrangements, processes to enable clear and effective oversight are not yet sufficiently effective. This has contributed to leaders and managers not identifying some significant shortfalls and areas for improvement. For example, some important records contain contradictory information. Other records that detail information about the child's risks are inaccurate and do not fully reflect their needs. This increases the risk the child could receive inconsistent care.

Managers have not routinely reviewed information detailed in the home's statement of purpose to ensure that it reflects the day-to-day running of the home. This has the potential to be unclear about the quality of care provided.

Staff said they feel well supported by leaders and managers. They have regular team meetings, supervision sessions and annual appraisals. These meetings provide an opportunity for the staff to seek further direction and support. The manager is unable to access most of the appraisals for staff, therefore opportunities to review areas for staff development may be missed.

New staff benefit from a clear and in-depth induction. One member of staff has developed a new induction guide that is used in the wider organisation. This effective process helps staff understand the expectations of their role and the impact of delivering good-quality care for children.

The staff have high expectations for the child. They talk about the child's achievements with pride.

The steps in the compliance notices have been met. Three requirements have been restated following this inspection, along with 4 recommendations.

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; 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; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(vii)(b)(e))	4 June 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.	5 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; 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; 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)(c)(f)(h))	
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(ii)(iii))	4 January 2027

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children have access to appropriate advocacy support from people they choose, where possible. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person should ensure that (where appropriate) children are offered a wide range of activities in keeping with hobbies and interests. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 31, paragraph 6.5)

- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is kept under regular review. The statement should include how staff provide individualised care to the children currently living in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that any notes of the content and/or outcomes of appraisal sessions can be accessed by the leaders and managers. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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: SC068076

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2DH

Responsible individual: Kirsty Cuttler

Registered manager: Rosanne Calton

Inspector

Lexi Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

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