

SC389781

Registered provider: The Qalb Short Break Services Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A limited company owns and runs this short-breaks service. The home provides residential short breaks, day care and after-school club services for children with learning and physical disabilities. The organisation has a service-level agreement with the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

The home provides short breaks for up to eight children and young people at a time.

The home and the manager registered with Ofsted in January 2009. The manager is suitably qualified.

During the inspection, the inspectors were aware that a serious incident was under investigation by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate incidents of this kind, inspectors considered the actions the home has taken in response to the incident, alongside other relevant evidence available to them.

Inspection date: 14 March 2025

Date of last inspection: 17 July 2024

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

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

Inspectors have 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

This visit was carried out to address specific concerns received by Ofsted. We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Leaders and managers have responded well to concerns raised following an internal investigation. They have worked diligently to respond to the shortfalls raised and have been working to a detailed action plan to improve staff practice, and progress is evident. Leaders and managers work well with the commissioning team and the local authority designated officer and have shared the action plan.

Leaders and managers have reviewed and strengthened their assessment process of children's needs when they stay at the home. They have reviewed children's risk assessments and added a new section to describe children's presentation when they are unwell. This helps staff to understand what early signs to look out for if children become unwell and take prompt actions to ensure that they receive medical attention if required. Although the majority of children had this information on their risk assessment, two children did not. Leaders and managers took immediate action to rectify this at the inspection. The majority of staff have completed training in basic clinical observations, and managers have a date for all the staff to complete this training.

All staff have completed first-aid training. Managers have liaised with the Resuscitation Council UK for advice on the training syllabus provided to staff by the external agency. This is to ensure that the external training commissioned provides staff with the appropriate knowledge and expertise to deliver emergency first aid to children, including those with mobility difficulties. Staff who were spoken to say training has been beneficial, and they are due to attend additional training on crisis management to ensure that they have appropriate skills to deal with emergencies in their roles.

Management oversight of the home has significantly improved. Leaders and managers show appropriate understanding of the home's strengths and areas for improvement. They carry out regular audits to evaluate the quality of care and children's outcomes. The deputy manager completes regular random checks of children's records, including body map, daily logs and medication administration, to ensure that staff follow correct procedures.

Leaders and managers have introduced new guidelines when using the minibus with children on board. Guidelines include the staff ratios required to ensure that children are always supervised adequately while on the minibus. Staff now complete observations of children's presentation during minibus journeys, which are reviewed by managers to ensure that action can be taken if there are any concerns raised.

Leaders and managers ensure that there are accurate recordings of incidents and provide a summary of the actions taken. This ensures that staff continue to follow agreed procedures and benefit from any learning from the incidents.

The home has a calm, welcoming and homely environment. It is maintained to an appropriate standard. Children are comfortable in the home, and staff are warm and caring.

Children who were spoken to said they feel safe when they stay at the home and can talk to staff about any worries. One child described their stay as 'fun' and said that they love coming to stay because it feels like 'family'. Staff use appropriate methods of communication for nonverbal children, such as visual aids, to help children to share their views and feelings.

Staff and managers have regular individual and group supervision. The registered manager now receives clinical supervision by an external person, which they find beneficial and reflective. Staff supervision focuses on their practice and the needs of children accessing the service. Leaders and managers have introduced a monitoring system to ensure appropriate management oversight of the quality and frequency of supervision.

Staff who were spoken to showed appropriate understanding of child protection procedures and know who they need to speak with should they have concerns. They say that they enjoy working at the home and are supported well by managers who are always available. Staff show appropriate understanding of the actions taken to improve the practice following the internal investigation. The team is stable, and many staff have worked at the home for several years.

The provider has met the requirement raised at the last inspection. One recommendation has been raised as a result of this inspection, and one recommendation regarding staff appraisal was not reviewed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/07/2024	Full	Good
24/05/2023	Full	Good
25/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/12/2021	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised. This appraisal should consider, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member. Leaders and managers should respond appropriately to staff's contributions and set actions to address any gaps identified. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children's risk assessments are consistently detailed with the information required about their health and what staff need to be aware of to support children if they become unwell. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC389781

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Qalb Short Break Services Ltd

Registered provider address: First Floor, 3 Cumbrian Place, 217 Marsh Wall,
London E14 9FJ

Responsible individual: Yasmin Choudhry

Registered manager: Mohammed Rahman

Inspectors

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector
Amena Begum, Social Care Inspector

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