

# SC389781

Registered provider: The Qalb Short Break Services Limited

Full 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 inspector was 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, the inspector considered the actions the home has taken in response to the incident, alongside other relevant evidence available to them.

### Inspection dates: 17 and 18 July and 20 September 2024

The inspection started on 17 July 2024. The inspector returned on 20 September with a second inspector to gather additional evidence in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#) policy.

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 24 May 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 24/05/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 25/01/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 02/12/2021      | Full            | Outstanding                     |
| 05/03/2020      | Full            | Outstanding                     |

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

At the time of the inspection, 27 children were accessing this short-break service. The children have a wide range of physical disabilities and learning needs. Staff show a good understanding of the children's individual needs and set appropriate goals and targets for children to develop their skills when they stay. Parents say that they are happy with the care provided to their children and they have good communication with the staff.

Children enjoy a range of activities that are specific to their interests, such as playing games of their choice, using the sensory room and taking part in community activities. This gives them opportunities to have new experiences in the home and in the community. Children also benefit from having good routines and structure when they visit the home. One member of staff said that some children come prepared with their choice of activities for their stay and are allowed to choose what activity they want to do.

Children's voices are central to how the home operates. Staff use visual aids and short stories. This helps children to increase their understanding, share their views and make choices. For example, children are supported to choose what they want to eat when they stay. Children's views and wishes about all aspects of their care are considered.

Children's health needs are met well when they stay. Some of the children have complex medical conditions that require daily medication. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the children's individual needs and have completed relevant training. Children have detailed individual care plans that include parents and professionals' feedback. Managers have introduced new arrangements for monitoring children's health, including their heart rate, oxygen levels and temperature, to ensure that any concerns are identified and responded to promptly.

The home's physical environment is safe for children. The children's bedrooms have recently been decorated and are adapted to meet their individual needs. Staff encourage children to bring in items from home. The home provides a warm and comfortable environment for the children when they visit.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Staff know the children very well. They work skilfully and compassionately to ensure that the children enjoy their time at the home. Children's short breaks are arranged in advance, and allocation arrangements are based on parents' requests, taking account of the children's needs, abilities and staffing ratios. Parents share their children's health and welfare updates with staff before every short break. Children attend day care and after-school club before they progress to residential respite. This helps to ensure that children have a safe and enjoyable stay.

Children benefit from high staffing levels, and there are clear behaviour support plans to support their needs. Staff support children to understand boundaries and routines. This is done in a child-friendly way, using children's preferred methods of communication. Incidents are rare in this home. When they happen, they are well managed by staff, who use de-escalation techniques to support children. This means that even children with the most significant needs have positive experiences.

Known and potential risks to children are well understood by leaders, managers and staff. Risk assessments are clear and detailed. Children's professional networks and their parents inform managers and staff about children's risks to ensure that staff take the appropriate action when required. All staff have completed relevant training, which is delivered by internal and external trainers. This includes safeguarding of disabled children.

The admissions process for new children moving into the home is robust. There are extensive meetings with new children, parents and professionals before children first come to stay at the home. Leaders and managers consider all aspects of children's needs and how they can meet them. New children attend day care before progressing to residential short breaks to ensure that staff understand their needs and can provide the most appropriate care during their stay. One social worker manager said that staff were 'very stringent' in their admissions process and reassured them that they understood the new child before the child stayed at the home.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The home is led and managed by a committed and experienced registered manager. Leaders and managers have responded well to the concerns about the quality of the internal investigation following a significant incident and have commissioned a new investigation. They have also met the two requirements made at the monitoring visit.

Staff say that they feel well supported and they work well as a team. They receive regular practice-based supervision and have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and consider their professional development needs.

Staff access training in core areas, including safeguarding, medication, first aid and health and safety. They undertake targeted external training on topics such as epilepsy and percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy feeding. The majority of the staff team have completed the relevant level 3 qualification, and all new staff are enrolled on the course. Two of the staff have completed training courses that equip them to train other staff. Leaders and managers now have effective systems in place to monitor the training completed by individual staff. In addition, they have updated the workforce development plan to give clear plans for induction and probation and the process for managing poor practice.

Staff receive regular annual appraisals and performance reviews. However, appraisals do not include any feedback from children or from external professionals, which is a missed

opportunity for the manager to fully assess practice. In addition, actions set at the appraisal meeting do not always reflect staff's contributions or concerns raised.

## 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         |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that internal investigation undertaken following a serious incident in the home is thorough and completed promptly to avoid delay in learning and in making improvements to practice in the home.</p> | 18 November 2024 |

### Recommendation

- 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. In particular, 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)

## **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:** SC389781

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** The Qalb Short Break Services Limited

**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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