

SC389781

Registered provider: The Qalb Short Break Services Ltd

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 can provide short breaks for up to eight children at any time.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in August 2025. 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 has considered the actions the home has taken in response to the incident, alongside other relevant evidence available to them.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Currently, 24 children access the service on a rotational basis. Children have a diverse range of physical and learning needs, with some requiring daily medication due to medical conditions. Staff spoken to showed appropriate understanding of individual needs and work well with children's networks to help understand and meet their needs. Parents feel confident that their children are well cared for during their stay at the home.

Children's visits are well planned, with children mostly staying with the same group to support the friendships they have made. Staff contact parents prior to each child's stay to ensure they have the most up-to-date information, helping to make sure that the child's stay is safe and enjoyable. Parents say that children enjoy coming to the home, some children have been attending for several years and developed strong relationships with other children and staff. One child when asked to scale the home from 1-10, gave the home 100 points and stated that staff were very nice.

Children's views and wishes are listened to on all aspects of their lives. Staff use appropriate methods of communication, such as visual aids, to help children to share their views and feelings. This empowers children to raise any concerns or worries they may have and gives them confidence that their opinions matter.

Children have fun when they stay at the home. They enjoy a range of activities in the home including the sensory room and in the community. One child talked about baking, and another child enjoys minibus rides to the community during their stay. Children are helped to choose their activities using visual aids to help them express their views. Children have good routines when they stay at the home, and this helps them to settle.

The home is fully equipped to meet the needs of the children. Children's bedrooms are personalised when they stay. Children enjoy a clean, homely environment where they can relax and play safely when they stay. The home is welcoming, with photos of the children proudly displayed in some of the communal areas.

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

Leaders and managers responded well to concerns raised following an internal investigation and addressed all the shortfalls raised. Leaders and managers have worked well with external agencies through the ongoing investigation.

Children are safeguarded effectively and have developed appropriate relationships with staff. Staff show appropriate understanding of children's needs and know how to support them if they are upset. Staff can identify whether children are happy or sad by the sounds or gestures that they make. They work well with parents and the placing authority to ensure that any concerns are shared appropriately to keep children safe during their stay.

Staff spoken to show appropriate understanding of safeguarding procedures and work well with other professionals, including social workers, education staff and families. They visit schools and family homes to share strategies to help understand individual needs. Strong joint working with a team of relevant professionals ensures that children receive well-coordinated care and support.

Positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded. Staff celebrate children's achievements, no matter how small, and view all behaviour as a form of communication. They talk to children about important topics in line with their care plans using the children's preferred methods of communication. Staff help children develop self-control, resilience, and new coping strategies and work well with parents and foster carers to understand behaviour. Incidents in the home are very rare, as a result, regardless of children's significant needs all children have positive experiences during their stay at the home.

Children's complex needs and vulnerabilities are well understood by staff. Risk assessments are clear and detailed and reflect children's diagnosis and disabilities. However, not all assessments adequately reflect changes in the children's needs. For example, some risk assessments do not reflect any potential risks when young adults stay at the home with children.

Staff manage children's medication well and show appropriate understanding of children's health needs and work well with parents and relevant people. Arrangements for the safe administration of medicines are effective. Medication is only accepted into the home if it is prescribed, labelled and in the original packaging. There are clear audits to monitor the process. Since last inspection, no errors have been reported.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The provider has appointed a new manager who is suitably qualified. The manager is a strong advocate for the children, maintaining excellent communication with their families and professional networks. The registered manager ensures that any decisions made regarding the children are carefully planned, well thought out, and in their best interests. They offer flexible stay arrangements to support the children, while ensuring they benefit from staying with friends in their peer group. Leaders and managers now provide transport for children to attend the short break following changes from the local authorities who no longer provide transport.

Leaders and managers have addressed all the recommendations raised at the last assurance inspection. There is appropriate management oversight of records, which are regularly reviewed. External monitoring supports the manager to make improvements at the home. However, leaders and managers have not assessed a conflict of interest arising from additional role given to the independent person in the home.

Staff say that they feel valued and well supported. They are offered a range of training that reflects children's needs. The majority of staff have completed the appropriate qualification in residential childcare and have worked in the home for many years. Strong

team working was observed during the inspection. Staff are caring, child-focused and have a good understanding of the children's needs, interests and talents.

Staff and managers receive regular supervision. However, supervision sessions are more focused on case records and management tasks and do not sufficiently discuss the needs of the children or staff practice. This limits management oversight of the quality and the impact of care that children receive.

In the main, partnership working with professionals and parents is very good. However, leaders, managers and staff do not consistently challenge placing authorities when they do not fulfil their statutory obligations, for example, prompt actions taken by the local authorities to help children transition to adult services.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that all staff and managers supervision is effective and allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of children assigned to their care.	30 October 2025
The registered provider must appoint, at the registered provider's expense, a person ("the independent person") to visit and report on the children's home carried on by the registered provider. The independent person must declare any actual or potential conflict of interest (whether of the type mentioned in paragraph (3) or otherwise) to the registered provider without delay and, if reasonably practicable, before conducting a visit to the home. If the registered provider becomes aware of a potential conflict of interest in relation to the independent person before or during the independent person visiting the home (see regulation 44), the registered provider must— make arrangements to cancel the visit without delay; and appoint a different independent person to visit the home. (Regulation 43 (1) (6) (7)(a)(b)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that any conflict arising from additional roles in the home by the independent person are assessed to prevent any doubts about their impartiality for the purposes of producing the independent person's report under Reg 44.	30 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should work in close partnership with the children's support network. In particular, the registered person should ensure that they maintain effective communication with placing authorities and take actions to escalate concerns where they consider responses to be inadequate. This relates to transition plans for children prior to their 18th birthday ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.3)
- The registered person should ensure that children's risk assessments are sufficiently detailed and are specific to the individual children and potential risks should be thoroughly assessed and planned for when children's needs change such as becoming adults ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Yasmin Choudhry

Registered manager: Rupia Khan

Inspectors

Dorothy Thompstone, Social Care Inspector
Jo Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

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