

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-break 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 statement of purpose says that the home provides a service for children with disabilities and/or special educational needs, including autism spectrum disorder.

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

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 May 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

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

Date of last inspection: 25 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
02/12/2021	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2020	Full	Outstanding
07/02/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who have short breaks at this home make good progress and have positive experiences. Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills, such as cooking, eating with utensils, listening and improving their communication skills.

Most of the children who stay at this short-break service have complex medical needs. Children's health needs are known and met. The communication with children's professional networks is strong, which results in child-focused care planning.

Activities in the home and the local community are varied. Staff provide children with a wide range of experiences to learn from and enjoy. The activities that are offered help children with their social skills and provide them with new experiences to develop their knowledge and improve their physical abilities.

Children have positive relationships with staff. Some of the children are non-verbal, and staff use a range of methods to help overcome any barriers to communication. This child-centred care helps children to feel safe and know that the staff care about them.

The planning for children's short breaks is carefully managed. Home and school visits allow children and staff to get to know each other and sensitively prepare for their first stay at the home. As a result, when children come for a weekend or holiday break, they are already familiar with the staff, other children and the home.

When children approach 18 years old, the registered manager and staff work closely with placing authorities to plan a good transition into adult services. The leaders and manager ensure that young adults have alternative adult provision before services end at this home.

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

There have been no significant incidents, complaints or physical restraints since the last inspection. The high level of staffing prevents incidents and ensures that children remain safeguarded. The children's risks and vulnerabilities are understood and known by staff. Staff know how to reduce risk and keep children safe.

Individual care plans identify the best way to support children to participate in decision-making and share their own experience of care. Each young person has identified targets to help improve their life skills. Many children make progress in achieving their targets. Parents feel 'confident' leaving their child for their short breaks and report 'good communication' with staff and that their children are 'making progress'.

Staff work closely with parents, schools and professionals to ensure that they implement agreed strategies to promote the safety and well-being of children. Parents and professionals report that children are safe and happy at the home.

Staff are consistent in promoting positive behaviour and vigilant in the supervision of children. Staff are skilled at de-escalating potentially unsafe situations and behaviours. However, the specific techniques used to de-escalate behaviour are not always recorded as required, and case recordings are not always accurate.

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

The leaders and manager have satisfactorily responded to the requirements made at the last inspection. They have made the home a more nurturing and homely environment, and children are safeguarded effectively. However, shortfalls in the recording of measures of control continue. The recommendation raised at the last inspection to improve this has not been met. This highlights some weaknesses in the manager's monitoring systems to ensure that improvements are achieved in a timely manner.

The leaders and manager promote staff development and internal progression. This has led to a recent change in the management structure and staff team roles. Staff retention provides the children with consistency and stability. This also helps the children to maintain relationships with staff and to feel secure and stable when they stay at the home.

Staff are provided with opportunities to learn, develop and improve their care and safeguarding practice. However, some staff do not demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of whistle-blowing procedures. In particular, not all staff know the procedure for reporting concerns about a senior member of staff.

Staff are well supported and receive regular group supervision. Although the group supervision focuses on children's needs, staff do not receive individual supervision where they can discuss their own needs and practice.

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— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	31 July 2023

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This relates to ensuring that incidents of all measures of control and discipline are appropriately recorded.	
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. 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)) This relates to ensuring that staff receive individual supervision, and that the manager's monitoring systems are effective.	31 July 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff know and understand the whistle-blowing procedures, including new staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.9)

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: 35 Beaufort Court, Admirals Way, South Quay
Waterside, London E14 9XL

Responsible individual: Yasmin Choudhry

Registered manager: Mohammed Rahman

Inspector

Melvin Davies, Social Care Inspector

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