

SC422464

Registered provider: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by the local authority. The home provides care for up to 10 children. In emergency situations, the home can provide full-time care for up to 2 children with learning and/or physical disabilities, some of whom have complex health conditions. This home also provides care through short-break arrangements for up to 8 children with learning and/or physical disabilities, some of whom have complex health conditions.

At the time of the inspection, 4 children were at the home for overnight stays. No children were permanently living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2011.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 March 2026

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: 1 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/10/2024	Full	Good
03/10/2023	Full	Good
24/10/2022	Full	Good
28/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children enjoy their breaks and are happy and relaxed in the home with staff. Staff embrace children's individuality; they use signs and symbols and observation of the children to ensure that the children have a voice regarding their daily care. One social worker said, 'Staff are attuned to [Name of child] and know their cues and noises very well.'

Staff have a good understanding of the children's individual and complex health needs. Regular communication with parents, means that staff have updated information regarding the children's needs. Staff work with specialist services such as a dietitian and physiotherapy. This helps staff provide the children with specialist care. For example, 'safe sleep' support and exercises are implemented by staff in line with children's physiotherapy plans.

The staff value children's individuality. They help children enjoy their time at the home and develop their social and independence skills. Staff work closely with education services to support children's attendance at school. Furthermore, staff praise the children for their individual achievements such as making their own breakfast, trying different sensory activities and developing their communication.

Staff assist the children to enjoy a variety of activities. Children spend time at local play parks, going to soft play centres, going out for meals and attending Christmas events. Additionally, children enjoy activities in the home, such as playing pool, baking and sensory and craft activities. These opportunities provide children with a range of experiences that helps them to develop their individual interests and skills.

The registered manager and staff provide children sensitive support to welcome them into the home. Introductions are planned and overnight stays progress when the child is ready. Consideration is given to how overnight stays can best support the children to develop friendships. These actions are child centred and help to reduce children's anxieties.

Staff share the children's guide with children and their families. This provides children with all the required information about the home. However, this is only in one format and this is not accessible to all children.

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

The staff have a good understanding of the children, and this helps to support the children to feel safe. One parent said, 'I have full trust in their ability to keep [Name of child] safe, while still enabling them to enjoy meaningful experiences.'

Staff adopt a restorative approach, and their responses are individual to the needs of each child. The staff are skilled at providing children with sensitive support during emotionally difficult times. They also provide continued observation of children after a significant incident. This means staff can understand how a child perceived an event and allows them to offer ongoing support. This individualised care helps children feel safe and prevents incidents from escalating.

Staff have physically held children to prevent harm. Staff actions are proportionate and used as a last resort when de-escalation techniques are unsuccessful. Children receive nurturing support after incidents and staff assess if any medical care is needed. Staff are supported to reflect on incidents and the registered manager's oversight is timely and effective.

The registered manager has reviewed processes and procedures to ensure that the children are safeguarded effectively. The registered manager has links with the local authority designated officer and seek advice when deemed necessary. Safer recruitment procedures are in place, contributing to children's safety. Medication procedures and protocols have been improved, resulting in a reduction of medication errors.

The registered manager ensures that environment safety checks are carried out and actions progressed in a timely manner. Additionally, the registered manager has taken actions to ensure that staff have all the necessary information to support children's safe evacuation from the home. Children have a personal evacuation plan and practice fire evacuations with staff. Staff have accessed additional fire safety training to support their knowledge of maintain a safe home.

Children's risk assessments are detailed and provide clear guidance for staff, helping them to respond and reduce risk for children. Children's plans provide staff with an understanding of potential behaviours and triggers, and actions for staff to take to support the child and reduce known risks. However, during the review of these plans, significant health and care information has been removed with a view of reflecting the child's progress. The staff know and understand the children and their needs and this gap in records has not affected the care provided to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by a permanent, suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. A new responsible individual has been appointed and is in the process taking on full responsibilities from the outgoing responsible individual, as part of the handover process.

The registered manager has improved her oversight of the home and uses monitoring and reviewing systems that help to develop the quality of care for children. Management oversight is recorded on incidents and identifies actions to be taken to support the children. The registered manager ensures that information is shared with significant others, including notifications to Ofsted in a timely manner.

The registered manager understands the children's plans and assists staff to progress these. This helps ensure that children have individualised care and enjoy their time at short breaks. Feedback from professionals was consistently positive regarding collaborative working and effective communication. Staff attend meetings relating to the children and demonstrate good knowledge of the children. One parent said, 'Brilliant communication is fostered from staff.'

The staff feel well supported by the registered manager. Staff benefit from monthly practice-related supervision sessions. Sessions are of good standard and reflective. They focus on the needs of the children and what areas of training or development staff require. Leaders and managers are currently reviewing how best to support staff's annual development reviews.

Staff receive support to gain the required skills as highlighted in the home's statement of purpose. Staff have opportunities to develop their skills in line with the children's individual needs. The registered manager has arranged for specialist nurses to offer guidance to staff. This has helped staff to develop their skills concerning children's specialist health, dietary and feeding needs. These approaches help develop staff's confidence and the quality of care children experience.

Monthly team meetings are well attended. These provide staff with the opportunity to discuss the children's care plans and team development.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have access to a clear plan that includes all required information to support them to meet children's daily care and provides clear steps of actions needed to mitigate any known risks. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is available in an accessible format that is in line with children's individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: SC422464

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Westgate Plaza One, 1 Westgate, Barnsley S70 2DR

Responsible individual: Lisa Vaux

Registered manager: Diane Wharton

Inspectors

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Deirdre Silkstone, Social Care Inspector

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