

SC428084

Registered provider: Wakefield 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. It provides short-break care and can provide full-time care on a short-term basis for up to 7 children with sensory impairment, learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Six children were at the home during the inspection and 2 of these children were living in the home full time. The lead inspector had the opportunity to spend time with all the children during the inspection.

The home is also registered with the Care Quality Commission.

There has been no registered manager since August 2025. A new manager has recently started in post and is progressing their registration application with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 February 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: 10 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/02/2025	Full	Good
17/01/2024	Full	Good
09/01/2023	Full	Good
17/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff spend quality time with the children, helping them to develop close relationships. The children were observed to enjoy their interactions with staff; they were happy and were having fun. Parents' views are consistently positive regarding the care offered to their children. One parent said: 'My child is always happy to see the staff.'

Staff embrace children's individuality and use different approaches to enable children to be involved in their daily care. Staff use a range of systems and cues to help nonverbal children share their views and make choices. Children have access to regular independent advocacy, and staff ensure that the information about the advocate is available to children in different formats, such as symbols and pictures.

The children are provided with tailored individualised care from nurturing care and nursing staff. The staff have a good understanding of the children's individual and complex health needs. This view was shared by the children's independent reviewing officer, who noted that in statutory meetings, staff demonstrate 'a high level of knowledge regarding the children.'

Staff work with parents and education professionals to support children's attendance at school. Information from schools was consistently positive. One school noted an increase in some children's attendance since living in the home full time.

Staff assist the children to enjoy a variety of opportunities. For example, children spend time at adventure playgrounds and parks, at the cinema and on shopping trips. Additionally, children enjoy activities in the home, such as soft play, and sensory and craft activities. These opportunities provide children with a range of experiences to enjoy and help them develop their individual interests and skills.

Overall, children's introductions to the home are well planned and child centred. When a child experiences an emergency move, staff sensitively work with others, including previous carers and education professionals, to help develop an understanding of the child and create a welcoming environment that helps to reduce the child's anxieties. Staff support children to have planned moves on from the home. They arrange goodbye activities and proudly celebrate the children's achievements.

Leaders, managers and staff ensure that the home is welcoming for children. However, they have not consistently ensured that all areas of the home are maintained to a suitably good and safe standard. The manager took some actions to address this during the inspection. However, a bathroom and several door frames require repair and hazardous items are present outside.

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

The children were observed to have close and trusted relationships with staff. The staff offer children sensitive and nurturing support. This approach has led to a reduction in incidents of concern and helps the children become increasingly safe.

Children's risk assessments are detailed and provide clear direction for staff, helping them to respond and reduce risk for children. Close staff supervision helps ensure that children do not go missing from the home. If a child goes missing, their missing-from-home plan informs staff of the actions required to support them and help them return safely.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort. Staff creatively interact with and observe children after any physical hold to understand the effect of the used technique on the child's wellbeing and feelings. This support helps ensure that children's experiences are at the centre of staff practice.

Staff understand the provider's procedure for the management of allegations. The manager ensures that any concerns are taken seriously and shared with the necessary safeguarding agencies. Leaders and managers have effective working relationships with the children's social workers and the local authority designated officer.

On one occasion, staff did not clearly record the actions taken to support a child following them sustaining an injury. There is no evidence to suggest any harm came to the child. However, gaps in records mean that the manager is unable to be assured of the actions taken by staff and any further support needed for the child.

Professionals spoke positively about the managers and staff. However, one social worker raised how they experienced delays in information being shared, specifically regarding sustained injuries to a child. Despite this affecting their ability to determine next steps, the local authority had no concerns regarding the welfare of the child and noted that communication had improved.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, the home has experienced several changes in staffing, including the loss of an established registered manager. These changes have challenged staff. Leaders have implemented systems to help staff to share their concerns and gain additional support.

The provider has recently appointed a new manager, and at the time of the inspection all staff talked positively about support and staff morale. Staff attend monthly team meetings and receive reflective supervision sessions that provide opportunities to discuss individual children and their own development needs.

Managers ensure that staff have access to training and development opportunities so they have the knowledge and skills to provide quality care to children. Leaders and managers support newly appointed staff to have the required skills. All staff are supported to have their development needs reviewed annually.

Leaders and managers understand the home and have systems in place to support their oversight and review the quality of care provided to the children. They welcome the additional oversight from the independent visitor and internal audits from other managers. This support helps leaders and managers to identify shortfalls and take actions to aid improvements.

Leaders and managers know the children's plans and are aware of the challenges around ensuring that all children have access to planned stays. Leaders and managers continue to recruit staff and work with the local authority to ensure that the support offered to children remains in line with the home's statement of purpose.

Leaders and managers have ensured that children have personal emergency evacuation plans. These plans have helped to facilitate fire evacuation drills for children and newly appointed staff. The home's fire risk assessment has been reviewed, and leaders and managers have worked with all relevant professionals to progress some required actions. However, the provider has been unable to ensure timely progress of actions highlighted in the fire risk and health and safety assessment, specifically around suitable fire escapes and safe fire safety behaviours.

Furthermore, leaders and managers have failed to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in preventing unauthorised access to the home, putting children's safety at risk.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(b)) In particular, the manager must ensure that all required information regarding children's injuries is shared with the placing local authority in a timely manner. Additionally, the manager must ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities in ensuring the suitability of any people accessing the home.	12 April 2026
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including provisions of suitable fire equipment in the home; provide adequate means of escape from the home in the event of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the manager must work with all relevant agencies to ensure that actions recommended regarding fire exits are progressed in a timely manner. In addition, fire doors must be used in line with safety requirements.	12 April 2026

This requirement is restated from the last inspection.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home meets children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities, including promoting safety. Premises should be presented, equipped and maintained to a suitably good and safe standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- The registered person should ensure that they have effective oversight of incidents, ensuring that staff clearly record any injuries sustained by a child in all related documents. ('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: SC428084

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wakefield Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Bond Street, Wakefield WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Cheryl Whitehouse

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Inspector

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