

SC450045

Registered provider: Norfolk County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority. The home is a crisis assessment and reunification service. It provides care for up to six children with complex needs who require specialist support.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2024.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 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: 11 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2025	Full	Good
06/09/2023	Full	Good
26/04/2022	Full	Good
11/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. This child spent time with the inspectors.

The group of children living at the home changes frequently due to the emergency nature of the service. Leaders and managers, work closely with external professionals, to support the needs of children. Leaders and managers offer bespoke training to ensure that staff skills meet the children's needs.

The home is spacious and bright. Children are supported to personalise their bedrooms providing them with a sense of belonging. Staff have designed murals around the home providing a warm and inviting feel. Staff display children's artwork and are proud of their achievements.

Interactions between staff and children are kind and attentive. One child said, 'It is a good place to be when you can't be at home with family.' Children who have moved on from the home are positive about their experiences and thankful to staff for their support. These experiences enable children to build trusting relationships with staff and have positive memories.

Since the last inspection, 14 children have moved on from the home to long-term arrangements. Staff support children to prepare for their moves. Some children continue to access staff support through the outreach service the home offers. This provides the children with continuity and enables them to maintain relationships.

Staff support children to express their identity. They are attentive to children's use of pronouns and gender identity. This helps children to feel heard and to express themselves. Staff support children with opportunities to attend events of their choice. One child was able to attend a Pride festival, and other children have been supported to attend LGBTQ+ groups. This allows children to feel accepted and valued.

Children are supported by staff to take part in activities which reflect their interests. These include rock climbing and visits to local animal centres, the cinema and the seaside. This supports children to enjoy life.

Staff support children's education and ensure learning continues when educational provision is not in place. Staff support children to develop independence skills, such as using public transport and learning to cook and clean. Staff help children learn how to take care of their personal hygiene. This builds confidence and develops children's skills into adulthood.

Staff support appropriate relationships between children and people who are important to them. One family member spoke positively about the positive weekly communication.

Staff have supported children to reconnect with their family members. For one child, this enabled them to build positive relationships and return to the care of their family.

At times, children have struggled to live with one another and maintain positive peer relationships. This led to one child physically harming another child. Staff made some efforts to address the relationship. They encouraged the children to spend time apart. They engaged the children in supportive conversations and encouraged them to reflect on behaviour that was not positive. However, there was a significant delay in these conversations taking place with the children and suitable alternative living arrangements being identified. This resulted in further incidents of bullying which had a negative impact on both children.

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

Staff understand their roles and responsibilities and how to keep children safe. Staff adapt to the varying risks children face and their changing needs. Staff follow clear risk management plans and strategies that help reduce escalation of behaviour. Behaviour support plans are detailed and embedded with research. This enables staff to use protective strategies to support positive behaviour change.

When children struggle with their emotional wellbeing staff take effective action. Staff work with therapists and external mental health professionals to seek additional advice. Children are supported to reflect on their struggles during well thought out conversations. This gives children the opportunity to share their views and access further support.

Missing-from-home procedures are individualised for each child and contain clear guidance for staff. Staff understand the processes in place and work well with relevant professionals to ensure that children are kept safe. Staff have planned conversations and undertake work with children to focus on areas of concern. Staff support the children to share their views in a safe environment. They use the learning from this work with children to update the detailed risk assessments. This helps staff to manage current risk and reduce future incidents.

On some occasions, staff have used physical intervention. These physical interventions are proportionate and used as a last resort to prevent children from coming to harm. Staff speak to children after each physical intervention and support them with aftercare. Managers speak to children and staff after these events and add learning to children's plans.

On one occasion, staff removed children's cutlery at a mealtime following an increase in negative behaviour towards staff. This resulted in further escalation of behaviour and led to the police being called. Leaders and the manager identified that the removal of the children's cutlery was not appropriate and was not in line with the children's plans. However, this removal of cutlery was not recorded. This does not ensure consequences are documented and effectively reviewed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced registered manager is supported by an equally experienced responsible individual. Both are child focused and support children to reach their full potential. The manager is proud of the embedded trauma-informed practice demonstrated by staff.

The manager is present at the home daily. The manager enables children to be central to decision-making. This has helped the manager to build meaningful relationships with children and advocate for them.

Leaders and managers invest in staff development. Staff undertake a variety of relevant and suitable training to meet the needs of the children. Additional training is delivered to support staff knowledge. Staff are supported to progress in their roles and develop areas of interest.

Staff feel well supported by leaders and managers and describe positive team morale. Team meetings are reflective and supportive. Staff are encouraged to share examples of practice and learning, and workshops are delivered regularly to develop practice. Staff feel well supported to work through challenging times.

Leaders and managers have good oversight of the home. When issues are identified these are quickly rectified and managers support staff to develop their practice. Managers complete regular audits and identify areas for development. This ensures that the quality of care provided to children is continually improved.

Professionals and parents involved with the home provide positive feedback about the manager and staff. One professional said, 'I have been impressed at how well [name of child] has settled into the home in such a short space of time, and the care that he's received from the team has been very thoughtful and supportive.'

Staff have access to supervision sessions in different forms. Staff are offered clinical supervision when required which supports staff to share how they feel and process difficult experiences. However, some staff have not had supervisions at the frequency promised by the employer. This does not ensure that all staff receive the same opportunities to regularly discuss their 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, 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— details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure. the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(vii))	9 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure they have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations', including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2')
- The registered person should ensure staff are able to recognise and address different types of abuse such as peer abuse, bullying in day to day relationships in the home. Registered persons should ensure that procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying are in place and staff intervene, protect and address bullying behaviours in a timely way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations', including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.16')

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: SC450045

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Martineau Lane, Norwich, Norfolk NR1 2DH

Responsible individual: Michelle Mackney

Registered manager: Neil Cocks

Inspectors

Syvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector
Sophie Levy, Social Care Inspector

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