

SC457780

Registered provider: London Borough of Brent

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides short breaks and long-term care for disabled children with autism, physical disabilities, learning disabilities and complex health needs. The home provides care for up to eight children at any one time.

At the time of this inspection, 49 children were supported by the service. One child was living in the home and three children were staying overnight.

The home registered with Ofsted in 2012. There has been no registered manager since August 2024. A manager has been appointed and has applied to register with Ofsted.

This inspection was brought forward to address specific concerns or allegations received by Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 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: 19 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2024	Full	Good
19/03/2024	Full	Good
22/03/2023	Full	Good
02/11/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy being in the home because staff are caring. Parents are happy for their children to come to the home and highly value the support the home provides. One parent said, 'We look forward to the break. It's a great relief that [name of child] goes to a place where [name of child] is safe, well cared for and enjoys it.'

Children get effective care and support. Managers agree children's care plans with their parents and social workers. Staff understand what support each child needs, and they work attentively to meet children's needs. Parents speak positively about the good care their children receive. One parent said that staff are doing an amazing job. Another parent said that the home is a lovely place for their child, and they really enjoy it when they are there.

Staff understand how each child communicates, and they use visual aids and social stories to help children communicate well. Children tell staff about their feelings, and they can make choices.

Children make good progress from their starting points. Staff are proud of the exceptional progress one young person had made by the time they moved on to an adult supported living service. Their general well-being improved and they were able to engage more with other people. They learned independence skills, requiring less prompts with their personal care and becoming increasingly self-sufficient. The young person was able to prepare simple meals, such as making their sandwiches for lunch at school.

Children's privacy is well respected. The CCTV system has been removed from areas of the home used by children. This ensures that children are not constantly monitored without specific reason to do so. The home is clean, tidy and a comfortable environment for children. Some areas of the home have been refurbished and redecorated, with some new furniture purchased.

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

Children are kept safe because staff follow effective safeguarding processes. Staff receive training that helps them to maintain children's safety and well-being. Managers work closely with parents and social workers to reduce risks for the children. Managers deal effectively with safeguarding concerns.

Staff understand the meaning of children's responses and actions, and they are skilled at supporting children when they become upset. Staff manage incidents well to prevent children being injured. Managers promote learning from incidents so that staff can improve their practice.

There is an effective process to manage children's medication. Staff have a clear system to record medication children bring to the home. Managers regularly check to ensure that medication is correct before staff can give it to children. This has reduced medication errors.

Managers implement safe staff recruitment practices so that only suitable staff work at the home. Managers have advertised for more staff so that they can reduce the use of agency staff. This will help staff to provide consistent care to the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager leads the home with the support of a deputy manager and shift leaders. While recruitment is ongoing to fill vacancies, there remains a stable team of staff who ensure that children get good care.

Leaders, managers and staff are proud of the quality of care they provide to children. Children form close relationships with staff and they are happy to be at the home.

Staff have varying views on the support they receive from the manager. Some staff say the manager's approach does not promote cohesion and good morale within the team. However, this does not impact on the quality of care staff provide to children. The manager is responsive to the concerns raised to improve staff relationships.

Leaders and managers have improved their quality monitoring processes. Managers now check all aspects of the home often, and they act quickly to make required improvements that they identify. This helps to ensure that the home remains safe and that staff provide nurturing care to children.

Staff get good training and supervision. This includes extra training to help staff support children's individual needs. Team meetings provide staff with regular opportunities to reflect on their work. This helps them to learn from each other so that they continually improve their practice. However, leaders and managers do not offer staff sufficient support and opportunity to progress to leadership roles.

Children's parents, social workers and other professionals unanimously provided positive feedback. They all said that staff work well with them to plan children's care. One parent said, 'Staff are so lovely and welcoming. They are very approachable and go above and beyond to accommodate our requests. They are part of our lives.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that in delivering their leadership and management responsibilities that a culture of inclusivity and cohesion is promoted within the staff team. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7)
- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plan includes how they will support staff to develop the skills they need to progress to leadership roles. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: SC457780

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: London Borough of Brent

Registered provider address: Director of Children and Young People, London Borough of Brent, 4th Floor, Civic Centre, Engineers' Way, Wembley, London HA9 0FJ

Responsible individual: Nigel Chapman

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Thobekile Bandama, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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