

SC463692

Registered provider: Milton Keynes City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide long-term care for up to eight children with learning difficulties and physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection, there were five children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2019.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 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: 18 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2025	Full	Good
08/01/2024	Full	Good
22/03/2023	Full	Good
07/03/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making good progress. They are cared for by a team of staff, who have their best interests at heart and who demonstrate passion and commitment in their roles. Staff build warm, trusting relationships with children, helping them to be safe, valued and emotionally secure. Children are confident in approaching the staff they feel most comfortable with, and staff respond sensitively and effectively to their needs. This consistent, child-centred approach supports children's emotional wellbeing and continued development.

Staff place a strong emphasis on recognising and celebrating children's achievements. The home hosts an annual 'True Triumph' event, providing a formal and inclusive opportunity to acknowledge children's progress over the year. This event is delivered jointly with the organisation's short breaks service, promoting a sense of shared community and celebration. Families, professionals and the local mayor regularly attend, reinforcing the significance of children's achievements and strengthening the supportive network around them. Children are encouraged to reflect on their own progress and celebrate their peers' successes, contributing to increased self-esteem, confidence and a positive sense of identity.

All children attend school, and staff actively promote their education. Children achieve well and maintain good attendance. Education professionals speak highly of the progress children have made since living in the home. Staff maintain daily communication with schools, ensuring they remain informed about each child's day, achievements and any emerging concerns. As a result, staff are well prepared to offer individualised support as children leave for school or return home.

Children benefit from living in a warm and welcoming home environment. Staff encourage children to personalise their bedrooms, helping them feel comfortable and settled. When a child is due to move in, staff begin preparing and personalising their room early to promote an immediate sense of belonging on arrival. A maintenance team visits weekly to address any minor repairs or concerns, helping ensure that children continue to live in a safe, well-kept environment.

Children's health needs are well met. Health specialists, including occupational therapists and nurses, contribute effectively to ensuring that each child has appropriate equipment and that staff receive the medical training they require. Although staff are trained to meet children's individual health needs, some have expressed a desire for further guidance to help them feel more confident when supporting children with rarer or more complex conditions. Staff feel this additional information would strengthen their knowledge and enhance the quality of care provided.

Children are supported to have a voice about their home and care. Staff routinely speak with the children about meals, activities and day-to-day decisions, which contributes to

children participating in holidays, trips and a wide range of leisure experiences that reflect their interests. However, children's views about the activities they take part in and their feedback on the care they receive are not consistently recorded. This limits the staff's ability to demonstrate how children's wishes and experiences influence future planning and may reduce opportunities to strengthen individualised care plans.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of each child's risks and vulnerabilities and know how to support them effectively to keep them safe. Children's plans are detailed and provide staff with clear, practical guidance on how to meet their individual needs. These plans are reviewed and updated regularly to reflect any changes in children's circumstances or the support they require.

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of the underlying reasons for children's self-injurious behaviours and work proactively to reduce both the frequency and effects of these incidents. Incidents are routinely shared with external professionals, including social workers, promoting transparency and ensuring coordinated multi-agency support. Children are provided with individual sessions, alongside regular opportunities to express their feelings. As a result, they feel listened to, better understood and emotionally supported, contributing to a reduction in frustration and distress.

Recruitment processes are largely well managed, ensuring that staff appointed are suitable and safe to care for vulnerable children. Employment gaps are explored with applicants; however, these discussions are not consistently or clearly recorded. The reliance on verbal assurance limits the transparency and robustness of the safer-recruitment process.

Safeguarding concerns and issues relating to staff practice are managed effectively. Concerns are responded to promptly, and shortfalls in staff practice are addressed in a thorough and reflective way. Children are well supported when safeguarding issues arise, and all relevant professionals are appropriately informed, enabling effective multi-agency working. However, one current investigation was not reported to Ofsted as required. This oversight reduces Ofsted's ability to maintain full regulatory oversight of emerging concerns within the home.

Staff are skilled and confident in de-escalating challenging behaviour. They work closely with external professionals to ensure that children receive consistent, well-coordinated responses when behavioural incidents occur. On one occasion, staff intervention resulted in a physical intervention. However, this was not recognised by staff as such and therefore not recorded in line with required procedures. Although relevant professionals were notified, the required documentation and follow-up processes for reviewing a physical intervention were not completed. This limits effective oversight and opportunities for learning.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, a significant incident occurred within the home that effected both children and staff. The manager recognised the potential effect of this event and ensured that all involved received appropriate support. Learning from the incident was used effectively, leading to strengthened policies and procedures. This has improved staff understanding of their roles and responsibilities and enhanced the overall quality and consistency of care provided to children.

Staff speak positively about the leadership team and report feeling well supported in their roles. They describe colleagues, particularly more experienced team members as knowledgeable, approachable and willing to offer guidance and advice when needed. The team works collaboratively and effectively, providing children with consistent and reliable care.

Professional feedback is consistently positive. Professionals highlight strong partnership working and effective communication as key strengths of the service. They also say that children make good progress while living in the home. One professional described a significant improvement in a child's wellbeing since moving into the home, demonstrating the positive effect of the care and support provided.

Staff benefit from regular, reflective supervision that helps them develop their skills and confidence. Newer staff receive additional check-ins, which support their learning and help them embed good practice. A thorough induction process ensures that staff are well prepared for their roles. Regular team meetings provide staff with a clear overview of what is happening for each child. These meetings keep children central to all discussions; staff explore progress and emerging challenges in depth and agree strategies to guide future support. This promotes consistency and ensures well-coordinated care.

The manager completes regular quality of care reviews, which demonstrate effective oversight of the home and a proactive response to any issues arising during the reporting period. However, the report does not include feedback from children. Although staff regularly consult children, their views are not consistently or clearly recorded, with time pressures identified as a contributing factor. The lack of recorded feedback limits the manager's ability to fully evaluate children's day-to-day experiences and to identify opportunities for further service development.

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	1 April 2026

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))	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(b))	1 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, the registered person should ensure that any conversations exploring gaps in a candidate's employment history are clearly recorded. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that if any of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious, that they inform Ofsted of the situation. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)
- The registered person should ensure children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to: respond to the health needs of children and understand their health conditions. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)

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: SC463692

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Civic Office, 1 Saxon Gate East, Milton Keynes MK9 3EJ

Responsible individual: Sharon Godfrey

Registered manager: Nicola Davis

Inspector

Louise Webling, Social Care Inspector

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