

SC489038

Registered provider: My Life - My Choice Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and short breaks for children and young people with learning disabilities. Services are provided for children aged up to 17 years which can be continued through from the ages of 18 to 25.

At the time of the inspection, 6 children were staying overnight. This included two children on extended stays. In total, 18 children were regularly accessing the service. The inspector spent time with all four children during the visit.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection date: 12 February 2026

Date of last inspection: 18 June 2025

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

This assurance inspection was carried out following a whistleblowing concern about staff practice, the level of support provided to staff, and the quality of care being offered to children. Children observed during the inspection were calm, settled and well cared for. Staff spoken to during the visit said that they enjoy their work and feel well supported by leaders and managers.

Two children and one young person are currently staying at the home on an extended basis. Other children and young people attend for day care and short breaks. They build new friendships and enjoy their time at the home.

Staff understand how to prepare the home for children's short breaks and have a good understanding of the children's needs. They consider each child carefully so that their stay is as welcoming as possible. Parents and professionals say that children enjoy attending for short breaks and that these visits have a positive impact on children's lives and the wider family.

Children receive warm, nurturing care from dedicated staff who know them well. Staff work closely with families and maintain regular communication. As a result, children experience consistency in care and routine during their stays.

The manager has robust oversight of medication. Staff are trained and assessed as competent before they administer medication. This oversight has prevented medication errors.

The home is suitably equipped to meet the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff receive training in the use of specialist equipment and regularly review risk assessments. This helps keep children safe. However, children cannot freely access all areas of the home at night because additional staff are required, and sleep-in staff currently sleep in the lounge.

Staffing levels are managed well to ensure that children who require constant supervision receive it consistently. Physical intervention is used only as a last resort to keep children safe. Staff are trained in its use, and after each incident they speak with the child to explore what happened and to help prevent further incidents.

Restrictions are in place, including locking external doors to prevent children from leaving the home and encountering harm. These measures are based on individual assessments and are clearly recorded. However, internal door locks have not been

regularly reviewed, which means the ongoing need for these restrictions has not been fully assessed.

Managers take appropriate action following all safeguarding incidents. However, they have not notified the regulator of all significant events, which limits the regulator's oversight. Despite this shortfall, children remained safe.

Leaders and managers work well with external professionals, including social workers, teachers and parents. One parent told us, '[Child's name] has made so much progress. We have nothing but praise for the staff.'

The manager completes a six-monthly review of the home and includes feedback from parents, staff and professionals. However, she has not gathered children's views, which prevents a full evaluation of children's experiences.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/06/2025	Full	Good
14/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/02/2024	Full	Good
06/03/2023	Full	Good

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— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) The registered person must ensure that the lock on the sensory room door is removed, or that its use is regularly assessed if it is deemed necessary. The registered person must ensure that children are not unnecessarily restricted from accessing parts of the home at night, including addressing the current arrangement where additional staff sleep in the lounge.	20 March 2026
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	20 March 2026

The registered person must ensure that children's case records contain up-to-date information about their health and communication needs, and clearly reflect the support provided by staff, including how children are helped to express their views. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) The registered person must ensure that significant incidents are notified to Ofsted.	20 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should include the views of the children and other professionals when completing appraisals with staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff are up to date with their training, specifically in relation to PICA, and communicating with non-verbal children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that they have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulations at least every six months. Children's feedback must be taken into consideration and evidenced in the report. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC489038

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: My Life - My Choice Ltd

Registered provider address: 22a Albert Street, Oswaldtwistle, Accrington BB5 3NB

Responsible individual: Andrea Brighthouse

Registered manager: Francesca Deaville

Inspector

Jennifer Quest, Social Care Inspector

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