

# SC055780

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a registered charity. It provides care for up to eight disabled children.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 27 October 2010.

We last visited this setting on 3 August 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 17 to 18 August 2021

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>requires improvement to be good</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 27 April 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** Four compliance notices were issued: in relation to regulation 12, the protection of children standard; regulation 13, the leadership and management standard; regulation 14, the care planning standard; and regulation 21, privacy and access. Following a monitoring visit on the 8 June 2021, the compliance notice for regulation 14, the care planning standard was not met. This was later met at a monitoring visit on the 3 August 2021.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/04/2021	Full	Inadequate
05/09/2019	Full	Good
21/11/2018	Full	Good
14/11/2017	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

Senior managers are in the process of implementing their plan in relation to refurbishment of the home, this involves consultation and agreement with a number of people. As a result, the overall experience and progress of children requires improvement to be good.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff because they know and trust them. Parents said that their children are happy and settled here, and that they enjoy spending time with the staff.

Staff understand the importance of clear, consistent routines for the children and how this helps to reduce the children's anxieties. One child told the inspector what was happening next, and where they were going.

Children enjoy a range of self-chosen activities. One child was excitedly getting ready to go on the train with staff, to attend their summer school. Other children enjoy trips to local parks, shops and beaches. As a result, children are becoming more confident to go out and to try new things.

Care planning is sound. Staff know the children well and adapt the plans to meet their ever-changing needs. Parents and professionals state that the children receive effective care and support that is enabling them to make progress.

Plans for children who are moving out of the home are reflective of the children's individual needs. This means that the two children who have recently left have settled in well to their new homes and are happy. Staff and the registered manager advocate well on behalf of the children and families to help them to get the support that they need.

Children's health and emotional well-being are improving. Recently, an issue with the administration of some medication could have placed a child at risk. However, this was identified quickly, and staff took appropriate action to ensure the safety of the child.

Following this incident and subsequent investigation, additional service-specific training was provided to all staff. A new medication admission process was established, and staff undergo a competency test for the administration of medication.

Family time is supported by staff who understand the complexity of needs for both the children and their families. A parent said that staff were rearranging their family time so that they got the opportunity to spend more time with their child.

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

At the last inspection, numerous issues were identified with the condition of the property. Since then, a decision has been made for the home to undergo a full refurbishment programme. Senior managers have yet to devise a comprehensive plan as to when the work will commence. Some remedial work has taken place, but the home still looks tired, worn and in need of repair.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection and safeguarding practice. Consequently, they can respond quickly to any emerging concerns. Staff understand the known and perceived risks to children.

Staff know the children well and can intervene quickly as they notice the subtle differences in their behaviour. They use kind words and calm voices to distract children and to help them to feel safe. Consequently, the use of any physical interventions is minimal.

Following an incident in a supermarket, staff updated a child's behaviour support plan and risk assessments to prevent a reoccurrence. The recording of this incident and subsequent complaint, made by a member of the public, would benefit from more in-depth recording of the actual event and the action taken. This would provide greater clarity about the incident.

Parents and professionals said that staff are proactive in supporting children who struggle with their emotions. Professionals said that, even though children can display challenging and aggressive behaviours, they are supported well by staff who keep them safe.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The home is led by a qualified and experienced registered manager. The registered manager accepts that they last few weeks have been difficult, but staff have kept the children at the heart of everything that they do.

Staff said that their moral had been low. However, they have reflected on the last inspection and are moving forward to support the children. Staff remain committed to improving outcomes and life opportunities for the children.

One new member of staff has joined the team, since the last inspection, and appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures have taken place. This helps to protect children from unsuitable people. There have been 161 shifts covered by nine agency staff. Whilst this is a high number, it was agreed so as not to introduce new staff to the children while they were preparing to move out of the home. This provided stability for the children.

Monitoring by the registered manager and independent person is not yet secure. Reports by the manager and independent person would benefit from more challenge and analysis to help the manager drive forward improvements.

Discussions with professionals and family members acknowledge that the home is in need of repair. However, the care of their children remains good, and the children continue to make progress.

## 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
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))</p>	1 October 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(b))</p>	1 October 2021

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a clear plan for the refurbishment of the home, which includes timescales for the completion of work and how the children are to be supported during this time. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that records such as incident and complaints contain sufficient information to tell the story of the event. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## 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:** SC055780

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** Autism Initiatives (UK)

**Registered provider address:** Sefton House, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4XR

**Responsible individual:** Katharine Silver

**Registered manager:** Karen Taylor

## Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector



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