

# 1272657

Registered provider: Inroads Essex Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private organisation runs this home. It is registered to provide care for up to four children whose primary needs are due to a learning disability.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this home on 15 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 19 to 20 October 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	inadequate
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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:** 30 October 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/10/2019	Full	Inadequate
10/10/2018	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress at the home and enjoy living there. However, the shortfalls identified in the areas of help and protection and leadership and management have affected the quality of care that children receive.

Children build positive and trusting relationships with staff. Children enjoy spending time with staff and are relaxed in their company. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of children's needs. Good-quality plans are in place, outlining how children's needs are met. Staff support children to build positive relationships with their peers. One social worker recently observed a child interacting positively with their peers, and commented: 'This is great progress. [The child] never used to do that, and the staff have really supported the interactions.'

Children make good progress with their education. Staff communicate well with schools and have been able to work alongside them to resolve any issues in relation to children's education. When children have been unable to attend school due to the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have been successful in engaging children in education at the home. One child was proud to have been awarded a certificate from school for the work that they had completed during lockdown periods. Good support for children's education has helped give children a sense of pride in their achievements.

Children access a good range of activities. This helps them to become confident in the community. There are clear plans to ensure that children remain safe when accessing the community.

The home provides a safe environment for children. It is child-friendly and suitable for the children's individual needs. However, some communal areas of the home need redecorating and the garden is untidy.

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

There have been several incidents of physical intervention. Although physical intervention is generally used in line with children's plans, records of interventions do not always give a clear understanding of why the intervention was used, or a clear description of the intervention and what steps were taken by staff to avoid the use of physical intervention. Staff have not signed some records. The registered manager's reviews of incident records are inconsistent, particularly in considering the reason for intervention and identifying issues in relation to recording. Poor recording and managerial oversight of the records limit the effectiveness of scrutiny and learning to inform future practice.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of risks to children and how to manage their behaviours. Behaviour support plans are thorough and give clear strategies for staff to use with children. Staff manage some incidents effectively using the strategies outlined in children's plans. However, managerial oversight of these incident records is inconsistent and lacks reflection. Poor oversight of incidents means that any lessons that could support staff to better manage incidents are being missed.

Two allegations have been made against staff members. Managers have made referrals to the designated officer and overseen appropriate investigations of these. However, one allegation was not reported to the registered manager by a staff member until three days after the incident, meaning that there was a delay in the investigation beginning. Managers failed to address this issue with the staff member. Staff not following the home's safeguarding policy has the potential to leave children at risk. The failure of managers to address practice concerns means that such shortfalls are more likely to be repeated.

Two fire doors at the home did not close properly when tested during the inspection. Records of fire checks show that the fire doors have not been checked on a regular basis. Poor procedures relating to fire safety have meant that a risk to children was not identified.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The registered manager is suitably experienced and is working towards a level 5 diploma. It has been a challenging period during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff shortages led to managers providing shift cover. This has had a significant effect on the registered manager's ability to provide effective oversight of the home. The two requirements from the assurance visit on 15 September 2020 are raised again; both had been raised at the last full inspection on 30 October 2019. This demonstrates a failure by managers to address shortfalls over a sustained period.

Managers have failed to ensure that staff receive regular supervision, with some staff having not had supervision this year. Children at the home have complex needs and, at times, staff are managing very challenging incidents. A failure to supervise staff means that they are not being appropriately supported to meet children's needs. This is compounded by team meetings not being held regularly, meaning that further opportunities for staff to consider how well they are meeting children's needs are being missed.

Most staff have not completed appropriate first-aid training. The registered manager has failed to take this into account when planning rotas. Consequently, there have been regular occasions when no first-aid trained member of staff was working at the home. Some staff have not achieved a suitable level 3 diploma within timescales. Failure to ensure that staff are appropriately trained and qualified means that staff are not equipped with all the skills needed to meet children's needs.

Recruitment checks do not always include checks on why staff left previous roles that involved working with children or vulnerable adults. One staff member's photo, which was checked when they were recruited, was 17 years old. Poor recruitment checks mean that steps to prevent unsuitable people working at the home are not robust.

Managers have identified some shortfalls and there are plans to make improvements. However, these have not had an effect yet. Overall, the registered manager has failed to ensure that there are effective systems for monitoring the home.

The registered manager has failed to submit an updated version of the home's statement of purpose to Ofsted. A copy submitted during the inspection was updated in recent weeks and fails to show whether the statement of purpose has been kept under review since the last version review in August 2020.

## 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that allegations against staff are reported in line with the home's safeguarding policy and that any related practice issues are addressed by managers.</p>	15 November 2021
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the manager has clear oversight and understanding of any incidents of physical intervention and behavioural incidents to identify lessons learned.</p>	15 November 2021

<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>15 November 2021</p>
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—</p> <p>the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25 (2)(b))</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	<p>15 November 2021</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that checks include a recent photograph and verification of reasons for leaving previous employment involving working with children or vulnerable adults.</p>	<p>15 November 2021</p>
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate</p>	<p>3 February 2022</p>

<p>qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience.</p> <p>(Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that a member of staff trained in first aid is on duty at all times and that staff receive regular supervision.</p> <p>This requirement, in relation to supervision, was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	30 November 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p>	30 November 2021

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;

a description of the measure and its duration;

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v))

## Recommendation

- The registered person should provide a nurturing, homely and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children living at the home. In particular, ensure that decoration of the home and the garden areas are maintained to a good standard. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

## 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:** 1272657

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Inroads Essex Limited

**Registered provider address:** Suffolk House 7 Hydra, Orian Court Addison Way,  
Great Blakenham, Suffolk IP6 0LW

**Responsible individual:** Vivienne Norton

**Registered manager:** Grzegorz Szeliga

## Inspector

Joe Cox, Social Care Inspector

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