

# 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 provides care for up to four children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2020.

### Inspection dates: 16 and 17 August 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account requires improvement to be good

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers inadequate

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:** 22 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
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**

There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection. Children have lived at the home for several years and are settled. Parents' feedback is positive. Parents say that their children have made progress because of living at the home. However, the judgement of requires improvement overall reflects several shortfalls found in help and protection and several gaps in managerial monitoring and oversight.

Staff support a range of activities that reflect the children's interests. Children enjoy art and craft sessions, dancing and baking. The home has its own swimming pool, which the children make good use of. Children benefit from trips to the coast, soft-play centres and the cinema. However, these trips are infrequent due to staffing constraints and limited numbers of staff who can drive. This means that opportunities to broaden children's social experiences are reduced.

Children have developed trusting relationships with the staff and enjoy spending time with them. The staff know the children well and can communicate with them using their preferred method of communication. However, records fail to demonstrate that children are actively involved in the day-to-day or more-complex decisions about their lives.

Some improvements have been made to the home since the last inspection. Despite these improvements, there are still locks on children's bedroom cupboards, windows without curtains and doors that slam loudly. The garden is untidy and has overgrown bushes that obscure the views from the windows. As a result, children are not provided with a homely environment.

Children's attendance at school is good. Effective communication between the home and school ensures that there is a joint approach to problem-solving when a child is experiencing difficulties. Therefore, children benefit from a coordinated approach to education.

Risk assessments are up to date and contain risk-reduction strategies. However, records fail to show that staff have kept themselves up to date and informed of important issues relating to the children. Staff are inconsistent in their understanding of individual children's health and dietary needs. This shortfall means that not all staff have the necessary knowledge to respond to the children's needs.

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

Safe recruitment processes are not consistently implemented. Full employment history, gaps in employment and reasons for staff leaving previous roles have been

explored for newly appointed staff. However, managers have not ensured that these checks have been made for agency staff. This could lead to unsuitable adults working at the home.

Physical interventions are used to keep children safe. Records are generally thorough; however, several records are illegible. On two occasions, the manager has been directly involved with the restraint. On these occasions, the records have not been signed by an authorised person to confirm that they are accurate. This lack of oversight means that emerging concerns or issues relating to the restraint were not responded to promptly.

There are few recorded conversations with children. Staff do not routinely talk with the children to help improve their understanding of risk. Therefore, children are not routinely supported to understand and manage their behaviour safely.

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

The registered manager is child centred and has a good understanding of the children's needs. Children enjoy spending time with him. One child proudly displayed photos of a fishing trip that they had enjoyed together. Such activities create positive memories and enrich children's lives.

Managerial monitoring and oversight need improvement. Children's plans are not consistently monitored. Staff use restrictions to keep children safe. These restrictions limit the children's access to parts of the home and their belongings. However, the restrictions are not consistently reviewed to ensure that they are proportionate and justified. This lack of managerial oversight reduces the opportunity to make continuous improvements to the quality of care.

Communication at the home needs to improve. Team meetings are poorly attended. This means that staff are not kept informed of areas of concern or changes to the children's needs.

The manager writes a six-monthly review of the quality of care provided for the children. However, the manager has not demonstrated how he has responded to children's feedback and has failed to produce a plan of action to improve the quality of care.

On one occasion, the responsible individual failed to take immediate and appropriate action in response to a safeguarding concern. They failed to notify Ofsted of the concern. Such delay reduces Ofsted's capacity to monitor safeguarding arrangements at the home.

Fire doors require attention. Records show that a child's bedroom door has failed to close properly for several months. Despite being repeatedly reported, the fault has not been rectified. Fire evacuation procedures are not routinely discussed with new staff. The fire evacuation meeting point is situated near a busy main road. This does not consider the dangers posed to children who may have limited road safety

awareness. Poor procedures relating to fire safety mean that the risk of harm to children has increased.

Staff access online training. The manager was unable to show if staff have completed training in relation to online safety for children. Several staff have not achieved a relevant level 3 diploma within two years of commencing a care role. Failure to ensure that staff are appropriately trained and qualified means that staff are not equipped with all the skills they need to meet children's needs.

## 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 staff—</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the garden is well maintained and views from windows are not obscured by bushes.</p>	7 October 2022
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p>	7 October 2022

<p>help each child to develop socially aware behaviour. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff have regular conversations with children to help to develop children's understanding of safe and socially acceptable behaviour.</p>	
<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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that serious safeguarding concerns are responded to effectively.</p>	<p>17 August 2022</p>
<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 the premises used for the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that locks are removed from children's cupboards.</p>	<p>7 October 2022</p>
<p>If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(1) 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>In particular, ensure that immediate action is taken when a fault is recorded, that new staff are made aware of the home's fire evacuation procedure and that the suitability of the home's evacuation meeting point is reviewed.</p>	<p>17 August 2022</p>

<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</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) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that recruitment checks for agency staff are completed.</p>	<p>31 August 2022</p>
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate 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. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff achieve a relevant level 3 diploma within the required time frame.</p>	<p>31 December 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))</p>	<p>17 August 2022</p>



In particular, ensure that the authorised person signs the record once they have spoken to the user about the restraint.	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))</p>	17 August 2022
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review (“the quality of care review report”). (Regulation 45 (2)(c) (3))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the quality of care review contains actions taken and intended actions as a result of children’s feedback.</p>	7 October 2022

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about their 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. In particular, ensure that all children are included in decision-making about the home and that their wishes and feelings are recorded. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities inside and outside of the home. In particular, ensure that each child is supported to access community-based activities. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- The registered person should support staff to be ambitious for every child at the home and to gain skills and experience that enable them to actively support each child to achieve their potential. In particular, ensure that all staff read and

understand the children's plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5)

## **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, Orion Court, Addison Way,  
Great Blakenham, Suffolk IP6 0LW

**Responsible individual:** Vivienne Norton

**Registered manager:** Grzegorz Szeliga

## Inspectors

Rachel Watkinson, Social Care Inspector  
Paula Lewis, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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