

# 1272657

Registered provider: Inroads Essex Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and provides care for up to four children with learning difficulties.

The manager's post is vacant. An interim manager has been in post since November 2022 and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

**Inspection date:** 23 February 2023

**Date of last inspection:** 16 August 2022

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be 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.

Inspectors have 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.

### **The care of children**

Children feel comfortable and safe with the staff. They have built trusting relationships. Children said that they feel supported and cared for by the staff. Non-verbal children were observed with staff during activities. Staff use appropriate communication methods with children, who appeared happy and relaxed.

Children are supported to develop their communication and self-care skills in line with their needs and abilities. Staff use signs, symbols and verbal communication to help children understand their daily routines. Some children have social stories that explain their personal care routines, and who will support them. Staff support children to learn to cook meals. One child has a daily exercise routine to improve their physical health.

Children are encouraged to make choices and decisions about their lives. Children are consulted about meals and activities. One child chose his hairstyle from a selection of pictures that the staff gave him. Staff listen to children and respond to their requests. This ensures that all children can express their views.

Improvements have been made to the home. Bushes which blocked natural light from bedrooms and communal areas have been cut back. Children's bedrooms have new curtains and curtain poles. Cupboards and drawers in children's bedrooms and communal areas are no longer locked. Furniture in children's bedrooms is in the process of being replaced with new items. This provides a brighter, pleasant home and gives children access to their storage.

A parent provided positive feedback. She said that her son has made 'brilliant' progress. She has no concerns about his welfare or safety. She said that staff and managers improved his communication skills, which has led to fewer behavioural incidents. When she has raised small issues with the manager, these have been addressed quickly.

### **The safety of children**

Safeguarding incidents and allegations of harm are managed and appropriately reported. Appropriate action is taken to protect children while allegations are investigated. Learning outcomes are incorporated into staff practice which ensures that children are protected from harm.

A new fire safety assessment has been completed. This identifies actions to ensure that the home is safe. Several actions have been completed, although others remain

outstanding. There is evidence that the provider is working with the owner of the building to ensure that work is completed as quickly as possible.

On occasion, children are not supported by staff with enough training. Two members of staff supported one child; however, one of these staff members did not have restraint training. This does not ensure that staff can take appropriate action when needed to ensure children's safety.

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

There is a new manager who has applied to register with Ofsted. The home is in the process of being registered with a new provider. This includes new ways of working and new practices. The manager ensures that any changes are incremental so that children and staff can adapt without disruption to any changes. This is particularly important for children who need support regarding change.

The manager knows the areas that the service needs to develop. There is an improvement plan in place which has addressed most of the requirements from the last inspection. The manager feels well supported by the senior leaders in the organisation.

The manager has undertaken audits of children's files and plans. She has identified documents which need to be updated, and read by staff. However, action is yet to be taken to ensure that plans are amended, and that staff have read and understood them.

There are staff working in the home who do not have the required level 3 diploma in children's residential care. This includes several staff that are outside the required timescales to achieve the qualification. This fails to ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to support children.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/10/2019	Full	Inadequate

## 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 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>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff have restraint training.</p>	1 April 2023
<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 the actions in the fire risk assessment are completed in a suitable time frame.</p>	1 April 2023
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p>	1 April 2023

<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, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</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 (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff who are not qualified work towards the level 3 diploma.</p> <p>This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.</p>	<p>30 September 2023</p>
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## 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:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Tom McGhee, Social Care Inspector

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