

# 2720618

Registered provider: SV Care Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home registered with Ofsted in February 2023 and is privately run. It provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home.

There has been no registered manager in post since September 2024. A new manager was appointed in April 2025 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

### Inspection dates: 22 and 23 July 2025

<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:** 9 April 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/04/2024	Full	Good
06/06/2023	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children's experiences and progress are varied. Since the last inspection, eight children have lived at the home for various lengths of time. During the same period, six children have moved out. One child was successfully supported in moving to a new home. Another child was positively supported in moving to a children's home closer to their family as part of a plan for eventual reunification. However, staff have not consistently been able to secure the right support for children when they have initially moved into the home, including meeting any additional needs. This has resulted in some children experiencing unplanned moves out of the home and other children already living in the home feeling overwhelmed by the level of disruption in their lives.

When children experience periods of stability, they thrive physically, emotionally, and socially. For example, one child, who has lived at the home for over two years, said that their key worker is someone they can approach, scoring them '10 out of 10'. They can identify trusted members of staff to talk to if they have any concerns. Staff also take pride in the child's progress and ensure that the child knows this. The child has recently finished secondary school and has been assisted by staff in securing a college placement. However, the changes of children moving into and out of the home, along with the number of incidents, have affected the child's lived experience, particularly while they were sitting their exams.

Staff have not received appropriate help and guidance during the early stages of children's moves into the home. This has left them unprepared to provide the early support needed to help children settle in. This has resulted in some significant incidents occurring.

The organisation recently commissioned a therapeutic team as a resource to help staff understand children's individual needs and why they may react certain ways in different situations. While this new approach to working is still in its early stages, it has already proven effective when a new child recently moved in. This helped the child feel welcomed, and they were encouraged to go shopping and bowling with staff and children from the sister home during their first few days.

The home environment has benefited from recent redecoration, including repair work being carried out.

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

Since the last inspection, senior management has carried out several internal investigations into staff practice following safeguarding concerns. These investigations have resulted in the organisation implementing disciplinary procedures. While this

demonstrates that leaders are addressing shortfalls, there is little evidence to show how the actions resulting from these investigations are effective in informing the development of the quality of care provided in the home.

There is insufficient evidence to demonstrate that management oversight of practice has been reviewed following safeguarding incidents. For example, a recommendation that was raised five months ago regarding the necessity of increasing the accessibility of children's risk assessments has yet to be implemented.

When staff are subject to internal investigations that result in additional supervision, it is not always clearly recorded that this has occurred. This lack of visibility compromises the quality and consistency of professional oversight, as well as opportunities for organisational learning.

Staff are trained to use de-escalation techniques and safe holds when children, or others, are at risk of harm. When these interventions are necessary, staff ensure that incidents are fully recorded. However, professionals outside the home have expressed concerns about the staff's effectiveness in de-escalating challenging behaviour. The senior leadership team is committed to providing staff with new training focused on therapeutic care and trauma-informed practice.

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

Since the last inspection, the home has experienced several changes in leadership and has been without a registered manager for several months. Although the previous registered manager has remained involved in the home's management in their new role as the organisation's responsible individual, they no longer hold day-to-day responsibility for the home.

The deputy manager, who was also an integral part of the leadership team, left around the same time as the registered manager. This change has created a degree of instability for staff. The responsible individual has attempted to bridge this gap. However, the lack of strong day-to-day oversight, particularly during times when new children have moved into the home, has had a noticeable effect on the quality of care.

A new manager has been in post since April 2025 and is beginning to address the shortfalls identified at this inspection, with the full support of the responsible individual. Although these changes are not yet fully embedded, progress is encouraging.

In recent months, the home has increased staffing levels by using agency staff to support new children. Although this helps with staffing numbers, it does not always provide the necessary continuity of care for children, especially at times when their needs can be high. Despite the need to use agency staff, a core staff team has remained. This continuity has provided some children with a level of consistency, especially for the child who has lived at the home for over two years.

The new manager is beginning to address the lack of supervision sessions for some members of staff. In addition, wellness meetings have been established and are being managed by the organisation's welfare development officer.

Managers welcome feedback from the independent visitor and use this insight effectively to improve practice. For example, they have taken on board the recommendations and observations around the need to improve the quality of care at the home.

Staff have welcomed the new manager and are optimistic for the future of the home.

## 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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children—</p> <p>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 that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vii)(b)(e))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children’s safety plans and risk assessments are aligned and accessible to staff. Staff must have sufficient information, guidance, and training to support new children who are coming to live at the home. Safeguarding reviews must be sufficiently detailed and include clear management oversight.</p>	<p>30 September 2025</p>

<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home;</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff have the necessary skills to meet the needs of new children moving into the home, especially when those children have additional needs. Children already living in the home must be helped to prepare for the arrival of new children as well as the departure of others.</p>	<p>30 September 2025</p>
<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>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child</p>	<p>30 September 2025</p>

and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.  
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(e)(f))

In particular, ensure that staff receive regular supervision and that any changes in policies or practice, such as updates to recording methods, are clearly communicated to them. When investigations are carried out and actions raised, the registered person must be able to demonstrate how these actions drive improvements in the quality of care.

## Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all staff understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. This includes having the skills to de-escalate challenging behaviour effectively. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 39, paragraph 8.13)

## 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:** 2720618

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

**Registered provider:** SV Care Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** 71 Knowl Piece, Wilbury Way, Hitchin, Hertfordshire  
SG4 0TY

**Responsible individual:** Hayley Perrett

**Registered manager:** Luvuyo Mfazwe

## Inspector

Matilda Clode, Social Care Inspector

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