

Silver Birch Care London West

Registered provider: Silver Birch Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this supported accommodation provider

This supported accommodation service is owned and operated by a private provider. It can accommodate up to 48 individuals in 11 shared-living homes that are limited to accommodating looked-after children and care leavers.

At the time of the inspection, this service was providing supported accommodation for 22 children aged 16 or 17.

The organisation and the service manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024. The nominated individual has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: The inspection was announced on 12 May 2025 and started that day. The inspectors were on site from 14 to 15 May 2025.

Outcome

Consistently strong service delivery leads to typically positive experiences and progress for children. Where improvements are needed, leaders and managers take timely and effective action. The next inspection will be within approximately three years.

Summary of findings

Children live in homes with staff who understand their needs and support them to develop independence skills ready for adulthood.

Children's plans are well written, enabling staff to respond consistently and effectively to support children.

Children like where they live. When children need additional support from staff, this is managed to ensure this support can be reduced and children can live more independently.

Staff have not completed mandatory refresher training, meaning training is out of date. Managers have not identified this issue and addressed it promptly.

Overall experiences and progress of children

Staff understand children and treat them as individuals. Staff work with children to find out what appeals to them and then support them to pursue their interests. This means that children can participate in new activities and things they like. For children's birthdays, staff ensure that children have a cake, and they celebrate with them. When child's birthday plans with friends did not happen, staff in the home made sure they were still able to celebrate their 18th birthday. Children build positive relationships with staff, helping to provide them with a sense of belonging in the homes they live in.

When children come to live in the home, staff work with other agencies to understand their history, background and current needs. Plans put in place to support children are created using this information. Children are encouraged to take part in creating their plans. This helps to make plans more effective as they are based on known information and have children's input.

Children develop life skills and independence in line with their individual needs. There is an independence programme in place that staff use to support children to develop skills such as cooking, cleaning and budgeting. Progress is monitored regularly to ensure children are progressing appropriately.

Children receive key-working sessions from staff that support them to develop the independent living skills they need for adulthood. When specific issues arise for children, staff make sure that children receive the support they need quickly. The tailored support from staff helps children to receive the help they need to address any issues and live more independently.

Children are encouraged to express how they feel about where they live. Meetings are held with children to discuss any issues they may have. Children also have access to a separate complaints process to share any worries when they do not wish to do this in person.

Each home benefits from having its own manager, giving children and staff access to a manager to offer support and guidance as well as dealing with any issues promptly when they arise. This helps children to feel happier and more settled in their home, meaning they do not feel the need to use formal complaint channels.

How well children are helped and protected

Some children initially live in properties with a higher staff ratio, due to them being identified as needing a higher level of support. When this is the case, leaders and managers always make sure that there is a clear plan for reducing support for these children to enable them to move on to a property with lower staffing levels. This ensures that children are supported to achieve a greater level of independence as soon as possible.

When allegations have been made, these have been handled effectively by the manager. When further training has been needed for staff subject to these allegations, this has been actioned promptly. This means that children are not exposed to unsafe individuals working for the organisation.

Each child has a risk assessment carried out which is detailed with known risks. These assessments give staff practical advice about the support children need. This makes sure that children receive the right support from staff, which helps them at difficult times. One child who is at risk of involvement in county lines has had no further instances of being arrested since moving to the home. This shows that staff are knowledgeable in supporting children to reduce behaviours which put them at risk.

For another child who had frequent episodes of going missing, managers and staff have worked as part of a multi-agency group to look at the causes. As a result of these meetings, the child has gone missing less frequently and keeps staff informed of their whereabouts when out of the home.

When there are incidents involving children, staff respond appropriately to manage the situation and get them additional help when needed. Managers have robust oversight of incidents, ensuring that action is taken quickly when needed.

The manager's lack of oversight of staff training means they have failed to identify that half the staff team's safeguarding training is out of date. One member of staff who joined the organisation several months ago has not yet completed any mandatory training. Managers need to ensure that staff training is kept up to date and relevant, to ensure that staff have the necessary skills to support the children in their service.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The leaders and managers in the organisation ensure that they have a physical presence across all the homes to maintain oversight. Despite the geographical spread of the properties in the organisation, managers ensure that they visit each home at least once a week, and more frequently if this is needed.

The managers meet with other managers from across the organisation. This helps them to discuss issues and good practice at a service level to help drive improvements across the service.

The manager has worked to drive improvements to the support plans and risks assessments completed by staff for children and the quality of reports has improved. These improvements have helped staff to gain a better understanding of the needs of the children they support and ensure that children receive support which helps them to live independently.

Staff and managers receive regular supervision. This provides staff with the opportunity to discuss the needs of the children they support as well as making sure that they are supported to work effectively with children.

Leaders and managers do not ensure there are effective systems in place to collate information about children. Information about children is not readily available, oversight of staff supervision is not managed at a leadership level and the system relies heavily on reporting from care managers in the homes rather than at a leadership and management level. Without effective systems in place, wider information about children may be overlooked.

What does the supported accommodation provider 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 Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023 and the 'Guide to the Supported Accommodation Regulations, including 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 supported accommodation undertaking that puts children first and prioritises their wellbeing and development.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that arrangements are in place for the supervision, training and development of staff. (Regulation 4 (2)(g))</p>	1 July 2025

Recommendation

The registered provider should have effective oversight of all the settings, ensuring compliance with the Regulations and Quality Standards. In particular, the registered provider should have systems in place to ensure they have oversight of the whole service, including details about children and their risk factors. ('Guide to the Supported Accommodation Regulations, including Quality Standards', page 50)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children 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 Supported Accommodation (England) Regulations 2023.

Supported accommodation provider details

Unique reference number: 2748845

Registered provider: Silver Birch Care Limited

Nominated individual: Post vacant

Registered service manager: Christopher Sinclair-Davis

Telephone number: 0208 8481800

Email address: kamal@silverbirchcare.com

Inspectors

Leah Stannard, Social Care Inspector
Eileen Bultitude, Social Care Inspector