

1214396

Registered provider: River Valley Care Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to 2 children who may have experienced social and emotional difficulties and associated complex needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2025.

Inspection date: 13 January 2026

Date of last inspection: 1 September 2025

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.

The inspector has 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.

Since the last inspection, no children have move into the home. At the time of the inspection, one child was moving out of the home. The managers have ensured collaborative working with professionals to support a positive transition. This approach contributes to the child's' positive experience.

The child is cared for by staff who know them well. Staff support independence and encourage healthy relationships. They have supported the child to access a wide range of social opportunities, including spending time with loved ones.

Managers and staff promote education. When the child declined to attend formal education, staff encouraged constructive activities such as one-to-one tuition, bike riding skills and CV writing. As a result, the child continues to make progress with their learning.

On one occasion, the manager did not follow the correct process when the child raised concerns about staff practice. The manager failed to notify relevant authorities and did not complete an internal investigation. Furthermore, the manager did not provide the child with an outcome to their concern. This does not provide assurances that action is taken when the child raised concerns.

Leaders and managers do not take sufficient action when responding to known information about the child's risks. For example, the manager did not challenge or escalate concerns effectively when police officers failed to respond to their request for further information. This lack of due diligence undermines safety and leaves the child vulnerable.

Managers have provided staff with ongoing training to improve skills and knowledge. However, staff skills in report writing require further development. Not all incident records contain information regarding the de-escalation strategies used. At this inspection, managers provided assurances that record-keeping training had been scheduled.

External professionals spoke positively about the care provided by staff and managers. One social worker commented on how they felt listened to and that the child they work with is valued and well supported.

Managers have made efforts to improve monitoring systems. Since the last inspection, managers have created an action plan to address shortfalls and have developed internal monitoring tools. Managers have made some progress in addressing the previous requirements and recommendations. However, they have not been effective in addressing all areas for improvement. Shortfalls raised during

this inspection were raised at the previous inspection and are now repeated. Managers said that they are determined to rectify them.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/09/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/07/2024	Full	Good
05/12/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/02/2023	Full	Good

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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(v)(b)) The provider must ensure that when concerns about staff practice are made by young people, they are responded to in line with safeguarding procedures and that outcomes are shared with the young people. Furthermore, the registered manager must ensure that when there are concerns, these are escalated effectively. This requirement was made at last inspection and is restated.	10 February 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and	10 February 2026

promotes their welfare.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and

understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.
(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(d)(f)(h))

In particular, the registered manager must ensure that staff are provided with sufficient training and have the skills to meet children's needs.

Also, that there are effective systems in place to evaluate the quality of care, and that monitoring processes can identify any shortfalls in staff practice that require improvement.

Furthermore, managers must ensure that staff understand their responsibilities with regard to record-keeping.

This requirement was made at last inspection and is restated.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1214396

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: River Valley Care Limited

Registered provider address: The Stables, Chestnut Farm, Cuxham, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5ND

Responsible individual: Quentin Carson

Registered manager: Ovidiu Dinca

Inspector

Sophie Hills, Social Care Inspector

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