

1227335

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 May 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/11/2024	Full	Inadequate
14/11/2023	Full	Good
29/11/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child spoke to the inspector about their experiences of living in the home.

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out of the home, and one child has moved in. All moves into the home have been well planned. However, one child moved on from the home due to concerns that the child could not be kept safe.

Children's education is supported. The child is beginning to make progress in education. Staff collaborate closely with education providers and advocate for children to receive education that meets their needs. However, there are no clear plans in place to support the child to understand what their day will look like.

The child is registered with relevant health services. Staff support children to maintain their physical and emotional health. However, the child has not been sufficiently educated or supported to reduce their use of electronic cigarettes.

Staff have access to external therapeutic support, and the psychologist linked to the organisation provides support and guidance to staff, enabling them to reflect on and understand the child's previous and emerging needs.

Staff support children to have relationships with people who are important to them. The child's time with their family is supported in line with their plans. This enables children to maintain important relationships and increases their sense of identity and belonging.

Children are helped to develop life skills in preparation for living more independently.

The child enjoys a comfortable, clean, tidy and physically safe living environment.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The child said they are happy, feel safe and like living in the home. They are starting to build trusted relationships with staff and can identify staff they would go to if they had any worries or concerns.

The child's risk plans are clear and detailed. They provide information for staff on how to help children if there are incidents. Staff act proactively to respond to incidents and understand how to keep children safe. However, the home's documents are not always recorded in ways that are helpful to children.

Staff hold important conversations with the child about risks they may be exposed to. They discuss topics such as exploitation and substance misuse. However, opportunities to discuss online risks have been missed. This does not ensure that the child is helped to develop their understanding and awareness of possible risks.

Staff are calm and caring in their approach and use preventative behaviour management techniques to help children manage their emotions and frustrations. However, on one occasion the police were contacted to help the staff to manage a child's behaviour. The recording of the incident provided evidence of the home's understanding of the concerns, and follow-up actions were undertaken to identify any reflection and learning.

Since the last inspection, there have been two incidents of staff holding the child to keep them safe. Any interventions used are appropriate and well recorded. They are only used as a last resort.

Safer recruitment processes are in place to ensure that only adults who are safe to work with children are employed in the home.

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

The manager is child centred, caring and motivated. Staff are positive about the support they receive from the manager. Staff say that they enjoy working at the home and are committed to improving outcomes for the child.

Leaders and managers are taking action to address the instability in the staff team, which has led to a lack of consistency for the children living in the home. This has impacted on their continuity of care. Their actions are providing more stability to ensure that children receive consistent care from the staff, who know them well.

Team meetings take place regularly, providing opportunities for staff to reflect on the children's care. This improves consistency in staff's practice.

Staff, including the manager, benefit from regular supervision sessions. These sessions provide opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and to identify any additional learning needs.

Staff benefit from regular training opportunities. They have access to a wide range of training courses to meet the child's need. Staff say that they value the training that has been provided.

Leaders and managers work alongside external professionals in order to ensure that children benefit from consistent support. They undertook a reflection and learning review following a complaint being received from a child's placing authority about the way a child moved on from the home.

Leaders and managers are continuing to embed improved internal monitoring systems to further develop practice in the home and to enable them to evaluate the care provided to children. The home's workforce development plan and the suitability of the location of the home are under review.

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 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 promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and	18 July 2025

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; 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)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff have completed all identified training to meet the individual needs of children, and that training identified to improve staff practice is completed in a timely manner. In addition, the registered manager must ensure that the home's workforce development plan and training matrix reflect how often the training is required. Leaders and managers must ensure that they have oversight of practice in the home in order to identify patterns and trends, and to ensure that any learning is identified and used to improve the quality of care provided to children.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b)	18 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff complete records in a way that is helpful to children and write in a non-stigmatising way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure the child's behaviour management strategy should be understood and applied at all times by staff and must be kept under review and revised when appropriate. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulation's, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)
- The registered person should ensure that when children in a home are not participating in education the child should be supported to regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

- The registered person should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. This specifically relates to the use of electronic cigarettes and the risks to the child's health. ('Guide to Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies, including consultation with external professionals. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- The registered person should ensure that children are helped to manage their own safety inside and outside of the home. Staff should help children understand how to feel supported and protected when online and using electronic devices. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

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: 1227335

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Registered provider address: Exceptional Care Limited, Malthouse Business Centre,
48 Southport Road, Ormskirk L39 1QR

Responsible individual: Natalie Johnson

Registered manager: Karen Atkinson

Inspector

Michelle Snape, Social Care Inspector

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