

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 offers care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

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

The registered manager post is vacant.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected and their welfare is not promoted.

Date of last inspection: 20 May 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/05/2025	Full	Good
27/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/11/2024	Full	Inadequate
14/11/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Frequent changes in the leadership and management team and shortfalls in safeguarding practices are impacting on children's care and the support provided for staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the last inspection, 2 children have moved out of the home in an unplanned way. Their moves at short notice meant that neither the children nor the staff had the chance to experience a meaningful ending. The child currently living at the home experienced an unplanned move into the home; however, staff made every effort to welcome them and help them settle in.

Children are supported to attend education, and the staff help them to work towards their aspirations. Children are encouraged to plan for their futures and are supported to explore post-16 education options.

Children are in good health and their individual health needs are met. Staff support them to access specialist services when required.

Staff show genuine respect and warmth to the children they care for and support them to explore their interests and hobbies. Children have had opportunities to go to boxing clubs, horse riding and go-karting. Staff capture these experiences and collate memory books for children to reflect on and keep as reminders of their time at the home.

Records are not always made of important conversations with children. Staff say that key conversations with children about moving out of the home take place, however, they are not included in children's records.

Since the last inspection, improvements have been made to the home environment, which is now warm and comfortable. Children are involved in choosing the home's décor, and their bedrooms are personalised to their individual taste.

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

Children's risk management plans are not consistently updated following incidents. They do not detail all known risks and vulnerabilities for children. Furthermore, the plans do not include clear strategies for staff to follow to keep children safe. This places children at risk of harm.

Behaviour management practices at the home are not always helpful for children. On one occasion, staff practice contributed to the escalation of an incident, when physical intervention was used by staff who had not received the appropriate training.

Furthermore, the staff involved in the incident completed the debriefs and had management oversight of what happened. This does not ensure that there is independence in the debrief process and reduces accountability. This had not been addressed by leaders and managers before the inspection.

Since the last inspection, there have been two missing-from-home incidents. On both occasions, staff responded appropriately to ensure that the children returned home in a safe and timely way. Return home interviews with an independent person are offered to children when they return home.

Staff have completed refresher safeguarding training, as well as training specific to the children's individual needs, including self-injurious behaviours and substance misuse.

The staff rotas do not provide clear or accurate information about who is caring for the children at the home, including identifying when agency staff are working. A requirement in relation to this was raised at the last inspection and is restated.

Staff recruitment procedures are not followed consistently, which does not ensure that children are cared by safe and suitable staff. Overseas checks were not completed for one member of staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There have been frequent changes in the leadership and management team at the home since the last inspection. A new manager is now working at the home; however, she has not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

Monitoring and review systems are not always effective. Internal audit processes are not fully embedded and do not identify shortfalls in children's plans, staff supervision records or the manager's quality of care review reports. This limits leaders and managers' ability to effectively monitor practice, address shortfalls and make improvements.

Staff do not always receive regular supervision. This means that they do not have opportunities to reflect on their practice or ensure that they have the right support in place. Furthermore, the quality of the supervision records is variable. Annual appraisals do not always take place, which means that opportunities to review staff performance and identify training and development needs are missed.

The storage of records for children who have moved out of the home is inadequate. The records are not all centrally archived and leaders and managers had difficulty accessing the records during the inspection, despite children having left the home recently.

The statement of purpose is not always reviewed and shared with Ofsted following changes to the staff team. This means that the regulator does not have the most up-to-date information about staff working at the home.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all staff working at the home are supported to achieve the required qualifications within the timescales set out in legislation. This includes casual staff who have worked at the home for a significant length of time.

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— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's plans detail all known risks and vulnerabilities and provide clear guidance for staff to follow to keep children safe.	26 May 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— 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; 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—	26 May 2026

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(a)(f)(g)(h)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that monitoring and review systems are used to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided for 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)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that there are clear arrangements in place to support children's moves out of the home and that adequate challenge is made when moves are not planned in a way that supports children's emotional wellbeing.	26 May 2026
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the home's statement of purpose accurately details the staff working at the home and is shared with Ofsted.	26 May 2026
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home;	26 May 2026

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; 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— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that safer recruitment practices are adhered to and that all staff, including casual staff, have attained the required qualification to carry out their role, within the necessary time frame.	
The registered person must— The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure all staff have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year.	26 May 2026
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that—	26 May 2026

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (1)(b) (3)(b)(i)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that only staff who have completed the organisation's behaviour management training physically intervene and hold children. Furthermore, the registered person must ensure that staff must be debriefed by leaders and managers independent of the incident and independent scrutiny must take place to identify shortfalls in practice to safeguard children.	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. Case records must be kept— in a secure place after the child has ceased to be accommodated in the home. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children's records are stored safely and accessible by staff.	26 May 2026
The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (2)(a)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that rotas are accurate and include the full details of all agency staff working at the home and that any changes to shifts are clearly recorded.	26 May 2026

The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children (“a quality of care review”) at least once every 6 months.

In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—

the quality of care provided for children;

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

After completing a quality-of-care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review (“the quality-of-care review report”). (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(c) (3))

26 May 2026

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 Ltd, Malthouse Business Centre, 48 Southport Road, Ormskirk L39 1QR

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Kelly McCurdy, Social Care Regulatory Inspector
Jon Dutton, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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