

# 1250039

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to care for up to 4 children who may have emotional, behavioural and/or social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

There were 4 children living at the home at the time of the inspection. Their views were sought during the inspection.

### Inspection dates: 11 and 12 February 2026

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account

**requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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:** 13 May 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 13/05/2024      | Full            | Good                            |
| 22/08/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 09/08/2022      | Full            | Good                            |
| 21/03/2022      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness         |

## Inspection judgements

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

There are 4 children living at the home. The relationships between them have deteriorated over recent weeks. There is a lot of tension in the home. One child has been hurt by another child in a serious incident and now wants to move out of the home as they feel unsafe. Meetings are taking place to address the difficulties and make alternative plans for children.

Three children have moved on since the last inspection and one child moved to semi-independence. Two other children had to move on due to incidents that happened at the home. One of these incidents did not receive a timely response from a member of staff and could have been avoided. The other incident was as a result of staff not following plans in place to keep children safe.

Managers have not ensured that there are sufficient staff to meet children's needs. This is negatively affecting children's plans at weekends when staff are dealing with more urgent situations. Children, staff and one professional spoke about the lack of staff available to spend time with children when they need it. Children are sometimes competing for attention, which has contributed to an escalation in their behaviour.

Two children attend school regularly and are enjoying a range of learning opportunities well matched to their needs. The other 2 children are not attending well, which has affected their routines. They sleep in the day and are up until late at night. The manager and staff have not yet found ways of supporting children to have better routines when they are out of school. Multi-agency plans have been agreed to help children back into education. However, they are not yet effective.

A number of staff have left the home for different reasons. This has reduced the consistency of care for children and the opportunity to develop ongoing relationships. Despite this, children say they have people they can talk to and enjoy spending time with. When staff leave, positive endings are arranged when it is possible to do so.

The manager and staff support children to see friends and family. Two children are starting to have independent time away from the home. Children are in good physical health and attend routine appointments. When children take medication, they are supported to do this safely and in line with their prescriptions.

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

Staff have been required to manage a number of serious incidents involving children. Incidents have not always been managed effectively due to insufficient staffing. One recent incident involved a child being seriously hurt by another child. The child received medical attention. However, there were delays in staff receiving support to manage this

safely. There were delays in a risk management plan being put into place to protect children from further harm. Managers responded to these shortfalls when raised during the inspection. The child who caused the injury has been spoken to but does not understand the gravity of their actions. The manager has not yet arranged for the child to receive more specialist support to help them resolve conflicts in less harmful ways.

Managers have not ensured that risk management plans reflect the current risks and vulnerabilities affecting children. For example, one child has taken a knife into school, and this is not recorded in their individual plan. There are strategies to manage this risk, but it is not clearly documented. This does not help staff have clarity about what they need to do to keep children safe.

Staff are not always following risk management plans. Car keys have not been secured on 3 occasions, leading to children taking the keys and accessing vehicles. This practice has continued despite direction from the manager to ensure that car keys are locked away. One child has been at risk online, and this was not reported to the police at the time.

Some staff are new to the role and also the sector. They have received training in holding children safely, but say they do not yet feel confident to hold children. As a result, staff have not intervened in serious incidents in a timely way, and incidents have escalated, placing children and staff at increased risk of harm.

Children have been missing from home, and generally, staff have responded in a well-coordinated way. One child was missing for an extended period and the reasons why they were missing were fully explored and are being acted on.

Managers respond in a timely way when concerns are raised about staff. Investigations are undertaken in a timely way, and appropriate actions are taken to ensure that children are cared for by suitable adults.

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

The registered manager has been away from the home since the last inspection. There were 2 temporary managers who covered during this period. The manager has recently returned. She has faced significant staffing challenges, which has resulted in an increased workload. The manager has not been able to complete all required management tasks. For example, there are gaps in the supervision of staff and audits of medication. Following inspection, senior managers understand the importance of addressing the challenges which are hindering the manager's capacity to complete her work and have good oversight of the home.

The responsible individual has had not oversight of all aspects of the home. He was not aware that one of the managers was gaming with children as a way of checking their online safety. As a result, there are no systems in place to monitor this activity. The responsible individual was not made aware of a serious injury to a child in a timely way. This meant that he could not direct managers and staff about actions they needed to take.

Senior leaders have systems in place to quality assure the care of children. However, recent audits did not identify the shortfalls which were raised during the Ofsted inspection. This brings into question the effectiveness of those systems in guiding continuous improvement.

Managers have ensured that staff have been recruited safely. However, staff retention is poor. This has been addressed through strengthening the recruitment and induction processes. This system is newly implemented, and the effect is yet to be evidenced.

The manager has not submitted notifications to Ofsted about 2 serious incidents when children have been hurt. This reduces the ability of the regulator to have oversight of events happening in the home and ensuring that regulations are being met.

Managers have positive relationships with external professionals. There is good communication and collaborative working. This helps to progress children's wider care planning effectively.

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Due date      |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone.</p> <p>(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(i)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that children develop healthy relationships with adults and children in the home and develop an understanding of the impact of violence on others. This also relates to helping children develop strategies for managing conflict in non-violent ways.</p> | 15 April 2026 |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children 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—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 15 April 2026 |

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| <p>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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that there are effective risk management plans in place to keep all children safe and that staff follow those plans.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that new concerns about children are acted on and reported to the police where necessary.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that staff always speak to children about their experiences when they have been away from the home without agreement.</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>15 April 2026</p> |

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| <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(e))</p> <p>In particular, the registered must ensure that there is sufficient and consistent staff caring for children to meet their needs and minimise disruption to children's relationships with their carers.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that staff have the confidence to hold children to keep children safe from harm.</p>                |               |
| <p>An individual may only carry on a children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (5).</p> <p>A responsible individual must—</p> <p>have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated.</p> <p>(Regulation 26(1)(7)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that the responsible individual has the capacity to provide close oversight of the home and ensure they are fully aware children's experiences.</p> | 15 April 2026 |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40(4)(e))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that Ofsted is notified of incidents where children are subjected to an assault in a timely way.</p>                                                                                                                                                                             | 15 April 2026 |

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children who have experienced severe trauma, have mental health difficulties or have been excluded or out of education for significant periods can work through their past experiences and present needs so they can positively participate in learning activities and formal education. Staff in children's homes will play a key role in supporting these children in line with their personal education plan or EHC plan and recommendations from education and health professionals. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's relevant plans. This includes helping children to develop healthy and positive daily routines, particularly when not attending school regularly. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff receive regular supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

## 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:** 1250039

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

**Registered provider:** The Place Young People's Company

**Registered provider address:** 2 Lymeale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6NW

**Responsible individual:** James Binyon

**Registered manager:** Tegan Ellis

## Inspector

Laura Walker, Social Care Inspector

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