

1259061

Registered provider: Outbound Care

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide care for up to 2 children with social and emotional needs and learning disabilities.

One child has moved out of the home, and one child has moved into the home since the last full inspection. At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living in the home. The inspector spoke with both children during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.

Inspection date: 11 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 2 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 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

No serious or widespread concerns were identified in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Children moving into the home benefit from structured move-in plans. The manager considers the child's needs alongside the needs of those already living at the home, as well as the staff skills and training. This ensures that staff can meet the needs of children moving into the home. However, children's placement plans and agreements are not always signed on admission.

The manager and staff meet with children before they move to the home and children can visit the home. This helps children to build familiarity with the home and staff before moving in.

When children leave the home, the manager works flexibly with the placing authority to identify suitable placements and ensure that moves out of the home are well planned and supported. Staff celebrate the child's time at the home with a tea party and activities.

Children are registered with key healthcare professionals and are supported to attend their health appointments.

The manager works effectively with social workers and virtual school heads to secure suitable education for children. As a result, both children are accessing education and making plans to support their career pathways.

The manager and staff recognise the importance of family connections. They support children to build and maintain these relationships, including facilitating family time even when this requires long-distance travel.

The home is warm, welcoming and well decorated. The repairs identified at the last inspection have been completed to a good standard. The children's bedrooms are well furnished and personalised, and staff support children to keep them clean and tidy. However, one child's ensuite bathroom would benefit from a deep cleaning.

Leaders and managers' investigations into staff conduct and practice are thorough, and appropriate action is taken to address concerns and provide support when necessary. Leaders seek guidance from relevant professionals to ensure that the right conclusions and recommendations are made. Referrals to relevant services are made regarding outcomes.

Children's complaints are taken seriously and investigated fully. Children are updated on the outcomes of their complaints. This reassures children that they are listened to.

The manager has addressed the shortfalls in procedures when children are missing from home and children's safety protocols. This has strengthened practice in crisis situations and missing-from-home procedures. However, staff do not always use professional curiosity following missing-from-home episodes to gather additional information about children's associates. This information could support the quicker location of children in the future.

Incidents of self-harm are managed well. Staff offer children physical and emotional support. However not all incidents of self-harm have management oversight. Managers notify the regulator when there is a serious incident. However, sometimes, notifications are delayed. This prevents the regulator from having prompt oversight.

Staff complete direct work with children following incidents to help them understand risks and encourage them to keep themselves safe. Managers ensure that they maintain communication with children's wider network to secure appropriate support and escalate concerns when needed. Children are offered support from outside services, such as drugs and alcohol services and therapists.

The manager has developed a detailed action plan to address the requirements and recommendations following the last inspection. Monitoring and review systems have been strengthened to ensure that they are robust and capture shortfalls, helping the home to maintain regulatory compliance.

Leaders and managers have reviewed safer recruitment processes. References are now requested from all previous employment involving children and vulnerable adults, and all references are verified. As a result, staff are fully checked before providing care to children, and managers can be fully assured of an applicant's character and integrity.

One recommendation and all but one requirement raised at the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/09/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/02/2025	Full	Good
20/09/2023	Full	Good
08/02/2023	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— 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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)(i)(v)(b)) Leaders and managers must ensure that professional curiosity is incorporated into practice to safeguard children, and any information gathered is effectively used to reduce risks. In addition, managers must ensure that they have oversight of all incidents in the home to ensure that staff responses are in line with safety plans. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	22 April 2026
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;	22 April 2026

are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) Leaders and managers must ensure that admission documentation is signed and dated by relevant professionals on the date of admission.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(e))	22 April 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.7)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1259061

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Outbound Care

Registered provider address: Outbound Care Ltd, Unit 2, Metropolitan Business Park, Preston New Road, Blackpool FY3 9LT

Responsible individual: Ian Chadwick

Registered manager: Suzanna Hargreaves

Inspector

Renée Sims, Social Care Inspector

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