

2510201

Registered provider: Outbound Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a private provider. It offers care for up to 2 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home, and 2 children have moved in. At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home. The inspector spoke with both children during the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 April 2026

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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/07/2025	Full	Good
01/10/2024	Full	Good
17/10/2023	Full	Good
17/01/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children experience warm, supportive relationships with staff who promote routines, independence and positive outcomes. Staff advocate effectively for children's education and employment, as well as well-planned moves to semi-independence.

Leaders and staff respond appropriately to risk, missing-from-home incidents and significant events, and they work closely with professional networks to safeguard children.

The staff team benefits from committed leadership, effective monitoring and support. Recruitment, induction and supervision are robust. However, quality of care reviews and independent scrutiny are not always fully informed by the views of staff, children or external professionals.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are supported to build positive, trusting relationships with staff. Interactions between staff and children are warm, friendly and supportive. Staff encourage children to maintain consistent daily routines.

One child's move from the home to semi-independent living was well planned and carefully managed. Staff supported the child as they prepared for independence by helping them develop practical skills, including budgeting, cooking and household tasks. This approach helped the child feel confident and better equipped for independent living. Staff appropriately celebrated the child's time in the home through a shared meal and thoughtful gifts, which helped the child feel supported.

The manager considers children's needs alongside the skills and experience of the staff team when children move into the home. Staff share relevant information with social workers. However, children do not always receive information about the home and staff in advance. In addition, staff do not always arrange introductory meetings or telephone calls before children move in. This lack of preparation can increase children's anxiety and uncertainty, particularly at a time of significant change.

The manager and staff actively advocate for children's education. They work effectively with professionals to encourage children to engage in education or training and to secure appropriate educational placements. When children are not in formal education, staff provide structured home learning. This includes educational activities, the development of independence skills and access to tutoring. Staff also help children develop employment skills, including creating a CV. As a result, one child secured a period of employment.

Staff routinely capture children's views through daily conversations and weekly meetings, where children contribute to discussions about activities and meals. Monthly 'your voice' meetings provide children with regular opportunities to raise concerns and influence decisions about their care. The manager and staff share children's views with their wider networks and advocate on their behalf. This has contributed to positive outcomes, including one child returning to their home area to live in a semi-independent setting.

The home is well maintained and appropriately furnished. Children's photos are displayed throughout the home, helping create a personal and welcoming environment. Children's bedrooms are spacious, clean and tidy. However, one child's bedroom drawers are damaged and awaiting replacement, which detracts from the otherwise positive presentation of the home.

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

Children are referred to specialist services to carry out targeted work for their identified risks, such as knife crime, substance misuse and going missing from home, but they often refuse to engage. Staff carry out follow-up work with children after incidents to help them understand risks and encourage safer choices. However, this work is not always sufficiently developed to fully explore the impact and longer-term consequences for children.

There have been a high number of missing-from-home episodes during the inspection period, some of which were for prolonged periods. The home has clear, detailed protocols in place. Staff follow these procedures and make persistent efforts to maintain contact with children and locate them. The manager and staff work closely with children's networks to strengthen safety planning and reduce the risk of children going missing. When children return, staff welcome them back positively and make sure that they are safe, well and emotionally supported.

Leaders' investigations into staff conduct are thorough. They seek advice from appropriate professionals to ensure that conclusions are robust and that recommendations are proportionate. They take appropriate action to address concerns. However, learning identified to improve practice is not always delivered to all staff involved. This means that improvements in staff practice and conduct are not consistently embedded across the team.

The manager ensures that all staff complete mandatory training and receive additional training to support children's identified risks and health needs. As a result, staff have a good understanding of children's risks and know how to respond effectively to prevent and reduce harm.

Staff respond appropriately to significant incidents and follow the relevant risk assessments. They report concerns to external agencies, including the police, when required. The manager communicates effectively with children's professional networks to escalate concerns and secure additional support when necessary. However, leaders do

not always notify the regulator of significant incidents in a timely manner. This limits the regulator's ability to maintain effective oversight.

In response to identified fire safety risks linked to smoking in bedrooms, staff carry out daily checks to ensure that smoke alarms are in place and functioning. Leaders have identified the need to secure smoke alarms to prevent their removal. However, this action was not implemented promptly, resulting in safety risks not being addressed as quickly as possible.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced manager and deputy manager who are committed to achieving positive outcomes for children. The manager is currently working her notice period. Leaders have robust plans in place to ensure continuity and stability. These include a structured 2-week handover and a detailed development plan that clearly sets out priorities for the home, children and staff.

Leaders have effective monitoring and review systems in place. These include daily task lists and monthly audits carried out by the manager and deputy manager. The responsible individual produces a comprehensive quarterly quality assurance report. The manager also undertakes a 6-monthly quality of care review. However, these reviews do not consistently include staff's views, which limits leaders' ability to gain a fully rounded understanding of practice in the home.

Independent visits take place monthly. The independent visitor provides informative and evaluative reports about life in the home. However, they experience difficulty gathering feedback from children, families and professionals, and they do not always have access to children's bedrooms. This limits the effectiveness of independent scrutiny.

Staff receive regular supervision that focuses on children's outcomes. Supervision sessions are reflective and detailed, with clear actions identified. Annual appraisals support staff in reflecting on their practice and identifying development needs. The manager uses feedback from children and professionals to contribute to performance management. Staff say they feel well supported by leaders, value opportunities for development and enjoy working in the home.

Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment practices to ensure that only staff with appropriate integrity and character are employed to care for children.

Induction arrangements for new staff are comprehensive and well structured. They ensure that staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and understand key procedures. Experienced staff support new starters throughout their induction, which helps them build confidence and competence in their role.

Team meetings take place regularly and provide opportunities to reflect on practice. Leaders use these meetings to ensure that staff understand children's risks and the

strategies in place to support them. The manager also reinforces expectations around recording, reporting and professional boundaries. Leaders arrange additional meetings when new children are due to move into the home to ensure that staff are fully informed and prepared.

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— help each child to understand how to keep safe; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that precautions to prevent children from tampering with smoke alarms are implemented immediately to ensure safety and reduce risks.	24 April 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 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;	3 June 2026

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 feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(g)(i)(ii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff involved receive the identified learning arising from investigations into staff conduct to improve practice. Additionally, the registered person must ensure that staff use research to inform targeted work with children, particularly around risk-taking behaviours.	
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. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a) (5)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that they consider staff’s views when reviewing and evaluating the quality of care provided in the home.	3 June 2026
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home’s records (except for a child’s case records, unless the child and the child’s placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a)(b))	3 June 2026

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the independent visitor is assisted in obtaining feedback from children, relatives and professionals regarding the quality of the care provided. In addition, the registered person must ensure that the independent visitor can inspect the premises, including children's bedrooms.

Recommendations

- The registered person should establish a system to ensure that all serious incidents are notified to the appropriate parties within 24 hours. This includes notifying the regulator when children are missing for long periods. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that clear procedures are in place for welcoming and introducing children to the home. All children are entitled to an introduction, regardless of whether their move is planned or takes place in an emergency. Introductions should be flexible and, where appropriate, delivered over time and in ways that meet children's communication needs and levels of understanding. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraphs 11.8 and 11.9)
- The registered person should ensure that they provide children with a homely environment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2510201

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Outbound Care

Registered provider address: 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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