

2510847

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It offers care for one child who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

At the time of this visit, one child was living at the home. The inspector spoke with the child as part of the visit.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021. The registered manager has been absent from the home since May 2025. An interim manager was appointed in July 2025.

Inspection date: 24 October 2025

This monitoring visit

A full inspection was carried out on 10 September 2025. The inspector identified serious and widespread shortfalls in relation to safeguarding practices and ineffective leadership and management arrangements.

Following the inspection, two compliance notices were issued under Section 22A of the Care Standards Act relating to regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the actions taken by the provider to meet the steps outlined in the compliance notices.

The home admitted one child without fully considering whether the staff have the necessary skills and experience to safely meet their needs. Although the referrals manager and the registered manager engaged in discussions with other professionals about the referral, records provide limited evidence of a full risk analysis before the child moved into the home. All known risks, such as the close access to the train station, were not taken into account. This demonstrates that the

child's move into the home was insufficiently planned, exposing the child to avoidable hazards.

Risk assessments are not updated in line with the child's changing needs. There are duplications and gaps in the documents, which the registered manager has failed to identify. The child's risk assessments rely on staff ratios and the deprivation of liberty order (DoL order) to keep them safe. When it is evident the child's risk assessment fails to ensure their safety, there is only limited evidence of challenge or revision. The manager accepts that there are shortfalls in the child's risk assessments.

During the first two weeks of the child moving into the home, they were arrested by the police on two occasions. Staff do not consistently implement identified behaviour management strategies to de-escalate situations, which has resulted in risks to the child and staff increasing during incidents.

An online safety risk assessment has been implemented to restrict the child's access to the internet in line with the DoL order. However, checks of the child's games console are not consistently carried out. As a result, there are significant gaps in the identification and management of the online risks to the child, as staff are not aware of who the child is communicating with online.

Appropriate action is not taken to manage and reduce risks to the child. The child's risk assessment identified the need to replace the window restrictors in their bedroom with a more robust system and to relocate the radiator beneath the window to reduce the risk of the child leaving the home without permission. However, these measures have not been implemented. Consequently, the child was able to exit the home through their bedroom window.

Risks to the child's health associated with the use of vaping devices have not been adequately considered. Although it is illegal for a child of their age to possess and use vapes, they are able to do so. Additionally, staff and the child's social worker have occasionally accepted unlabelled vape juices that the child's mother has sent to the home without checking the contents or assessing the potential health risks.

Furthermore, when the child leaves the home to use their vape, this increases their risk of going missing. Although the child is subject to a DoL order, the current arrangements have not prevented the child from leaving the home. The child also has a history of multiple missing-from-home incidents, both before and since moving into the home.

The child has gained access to hazardous items, including broken glass bottles and a knife, and they have threatened to use these items when frustrated by staff actions. On one occasion, the child managed to obtain a knife from the kitchen despite it being stored in a locked cupboard, highlighting weaknesses in storage security, supervision and de-escalation techniques. During this incident, staff did not use physical restraint, which prevented further escalation but failed to reduce the immediate risk of harm. This incident ultimately resulted in the child's arrest.

Not all staff have received adequate training to meet the significant needs of the child currently living at the home. This includes training in criminal exploitation, alcohol and substance misuse, and attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. This could impact on staff's ability to keep the child safe.

Ofsted is not always informed of significant incidents. On one occasion, the child was able to leave the home without support and is reported to have accessed illegal substances from a member of the public. The regulator was not informed of this incident, which limits its oversight.

The manager has introduced new incident management forms to address the shortfalls identified during the full inspection. These documents are intended to help staff recognise the actual or potential actions required and prompt them to seek additional safeguarding guidance when necessary. However, staff do not always complete these forms fully or follow the required procedures. In addition, the responsible individual has not reviewed all significant incidents to ensure effective oversight, despite this being an expectation of the incident management process.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/09/2025	Full	Inadequate
09/10/2024	Full	Good
10/05/2023	Full	Good
12/04/2022	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 with 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) The registered person must ensure that staff have a thorough understanding of risk management plans and strategies in place to reduce the risk of harm to children. The registered person must ensure that systems are in place to promptly and appropriately escalate concerns in relation to staff practice.	14 December 2025
*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;	14 December 2025

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)) The registered person must ensure that there are systems in place so that managers have effective oversight of staff practice and the impact on children's safety and experiences. The registered person must ensure that staff record significant events accurately and concisely.	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies, or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d)) The registered person must ensure that there are effective professional relationships between the staff and the placing authority. This includes good communication and sharing all relevant documentation.	14 December 2025
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—	14 December 2025

mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; strive to gain each child’s respect and trust; understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(viii)(ix)(x)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff understand and respond appropriately to the child’s social and emotional needs.	
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.	14 December 2025

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child’s relevant plans; understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child’s age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child’s health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child’s well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the child’s health needs are consistently prioritised. Behaviours that pose a health risk, such as vaping, must be sufficiently challenged.	
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; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	14 December 2025

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that supervision sessions are recorded in a manner that is unique to each individual and conversation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2510847

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hopscotch Care Limited

Registered provider address: 19 Lancaster Road, Carnforth, Lancashire LA5 9LD

Responsible individual: Scott Usher

Registered manager: Keri Alston

Inspector

James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

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