

2519196

Registered provider: Holywell Children's Services Limited

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 or learning disabilities.

At the time of this inspection, there were no children living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2021.

Inspection date: 4 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 8 July 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

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

One child has lived in the home since the last inspection. They moved out, and no other children have moved in.

The provider has fully refurbished the home. New carpets and flooring have been fitted throughout, a new kitchen installed and new furniture bought. The home is comfortable and well presented. Staff have decorated the children's bedrooms in neutral colours so that new children can personalise them.

Managers and staff maintain an accurate and up-to-date record of visitors to the home.

Incidents in the home are rare. Staff responded appropriately to the only incident since the last inspection. However, the requirement relating to regulation 12 has been restated to allow staff to strengthen their understanding of how to keep children safe and report concerns to external agencies.

Staff do not use physical holds to keep children safe. They are trained in safe holding techniques should these ever be necessary. Children do not go missing from the home. However, the child who lived in the home had an appropriate missing-from-home plan in place.

Children have not made formal complaints. Staff routinely sought the child's views about the home, staff and daily activities. However, on several occasions, staff did not act on the child's views. This lack of follow-up does not demonstrate that staff considered the child's wishes or explained the reasons for decisions made about their life. This is likely to affect how valued children feel.

Staff use fair and natural consequences to help children understand how their behaviour affects themselves and others. Managers review these consequences and discuss them with the child, and records reflect the child's views well. However, the records do not evidence timely discussions between managers and staff about the measures used, and do not show whether leaders provided oversight.

Staff supported the child to access education locally and to make plans for education in the area they were due to move to, meeting a previous requirement. However, it was identified that the child did not have a CV before moving out and staff did not help the child to create one. This limited the child's ability to explore all post-move options. A recommendation has been made in relation to this.

Staff arranged routine health appointments and encouraged the child to attend. When the child initially refused, staff were persistent in their encouragement and explained the benefits of attending. However, staff did not revisit these

appointments before the child moved out, resulting in health appointments being overdue at the time of the move. A requirement has been made in relation to this. Staff supported the child to take part in activities both inside and outside the home. They encouraged the child to develop interests and skills, such as cooking and football.

Staff receive training that equips them with the knowledge needed for their roles. The manager monitors training completion closely.

The manager completes regular reviews of the quality of care and submits these to Ofsted in a timely way. However, the reviews lack evaluation and do not support effective service improvement. A recommendation has been made in relation this.

Managers demonstrate prompt oversight of records and incidents. However, they do not consistently evaluate the quality of practice or identify follow-up actions. Although the manager has introduced a workforce development plan and a placement learning review, the actions are not specific enough to support effective learning. Therefore, the requirement relating to the oversight of leaders and managers has been restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/07/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/03/2025	Full	Inadequate
03/10/2023	Full	Good
29/06/2022	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 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff understand their duty to keep children safe and know how to report a concern outside the organisation. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	27 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— 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 ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;	27 May 2026

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— 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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h)) Specifically, the registered person should improve the monitoring and review systems in the home to have full oversight of staff practice and identify lessons learned through critical reflection. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii))	27 May 2026

Specifically, the registered person should ensure that when children express their views, they are considered and responded to.	
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child’s health and well-being needs; and that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii)(c)) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that children are encouraged to attend their routine medical appointments, and their health needs are met, particularly when they are about to move out of the home.	27 May 2026
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration;	27 May 2026

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

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; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that their reviews of the quality of care are evaluative. They should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable them to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery in the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 9.30)
- The registered person should ensure the necessary support is given to children to enable them to access education or training, such as assisting them to complete CVs or other tasks identified in personal education plan meetings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.13)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2519196

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Holywell Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Dalton House, 9 Dalton Square, Lancaster LA1 1WD

Responsible individual: Sabe Connor

Registered manager: Don-Collins Ekwem

Inspector

Sarah Huntbatch, Social Care Inspector

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