

2526435

Registered provider: Shalamar Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to 3 children who experience social and emotional difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2025.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 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: 16 June 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/06/2025	Full	Good
23/09/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/12/2023	Full	Good
02/08/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children appear happy and settled in a home that reflects children's interests. They benefit from positive relationships with staff. Key-worker sessions capture children's wishes and feelings. Children are listened to and this informs their care planning. Planning for moves, education and visiting families is generally effective. These plans are supported by strong partnership working. Staff are committed and access a range of training. Staff supervision supports reflection and open discussion of their practice and the children's needs. There are several shortfalls: the boundaries and expectations are inconsistent and there is limited structure to children's daily routines. Leadership presence and day-to-day direction are not consistently evident. Children's do not always get enough opportunities and choice because of the staffing levels.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, 2 children have moved out, and 3 children have moved in. At the time of the inspection, 3 children were living at the home. All 3 children spoke to the inspectors.

Leaders and staff support children to move on in a planned and structured way. Staff provided targeted support to one child to develop their independence skills. This prepared them for semi-independent living. The staff arranged visits and supported the child to personalise their new home. Staff supported the child to move, settle and build flatpack furniture. This led to a positive ending. Another child moved on to a foster home. Staff shared relevant information with the foster carers to ensure continuity of care.

All children have an identified education provision. One child is currently engaging in full-time education and their attendance is good. Two children have clear education plans and bespoke arrangements. There is ongoing multi-agency work with schools and the headteacher of the virtual school to support positive learning outcomes.

Children live in a family-type home. The staff welcome pets. One child moved in with their pets. Others have been supported to have small animals. This supports important attachment and teaches children responsibility.

Children appear happy and settled. Children spend time in communal areas with staff. Children speak positively about staff and said that they have formed good relationships with them. A child said that they 'like living here because staff care.'

Staff seek children's views through one-to-one sessions, emails and discussions. Records are well written and clearly reflect the children's views. These are used to inform daily care and support.

Staff recognise and celebrate important events and achievements in children's lives. During the inspection, the home was decorated creatively to celebrate a child's birthday. Children's progress and positive behaviours are acknowledged. When children's unsafe behaviours reduce, the staff positively recognise and celebrate this. Children's achievements are illustrated in memory books. These provide children with a record of their time at the home and reflect on their positive experiences.

Staff make some efforts to engage children throughout the day. However, there is limited structure and routine to children's daily lives. Children spend extended periods of time gaming, with limited boundaries or expectations around screen time. This limits opportunities for engagement activities and healthy wellbeing experiences.

The home is not well maintained. Upkeep and cleanliness are poor. The garden contained a build-up of badly bagged rubbish, which is a potential hazard. There was broken seating in the garden and discarded household items. This was addressed during the inspection. Some areas of the home require a deeper clean to ensure that children learn about upkeep and cleaning.

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

A suitability assessment is carried out before children move in. This considers the child's individual needs and whether these can be met alongside other children already living at the home. These assessments are comprehensive and carefully considered.

Each child has clear care guidance in place. This includes information on children's background and how to communicate with them. It supports staff to understand why a child may present in certain ways. The guidance sets out trauma-informed care and support. Children benefit from an in-house therapist who visits weekly. The therapist provides support to both the children and staff. Reports are provided for children's review meetings. They offer insight into children's presentation and how best to support them.

Significant incidents are generally well managed. There is clear action taken when children go missing from the home. Missing-from-home incidents are managed appropriately. On return, children receive a warm welcome and a key-work session. This supports reflection and understanding and identifies any ongoing support needs. Information is shared with relevant professionals involved in the child's care.

Family relationships and links are well understood and supported. Work is under way with one child to support planned reunification. For another child, staff are advocating for the child to see their mother. Staff are considering the child's emotional readiness and wellbeing to introduce family time.

Risk assessments are detailed and clear. These help staff to understand each child's needs and identify risks. They support consistent management strategies. Risk

assessments are reviewed following incidents. However, the rationale for changes is not always clearly recorded. Dates showing when risks are increased or reduced are not evident. This limits clarity around when reviews have taken place.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a qualified and experienced manager. The manager knows the children well and has a good understanding of their individual needs and risks. There has been some improvement to some areas since the last inspection. There is appropriate oversight of documentation and staff practice.

Staff have access to a range of training which reflects the needs of the children. The staff team is currently understaffed, with additional staff recruitment under way. Bank staff are used to support continuity and consistency for children. The bank team receives core training alongside additional training when required.

Staff supervision is provided in line with organisational policy. It supports an open culture in which staff can discuss children's needs, practice issues and any challenges. It also supports staff to receive feedback on their performance and development.

Leaders and managers work well with external professionals to safeguard children. Information is shared in a timely way to support effective decision-making and planning. Feedback from a child's social worker is positive, stating that staff have been 'wonderful'. A parent said that communication is good and they have regular updates.

Staff are committed and try hard to meet the needs of the children. However, the staffing structure does not always enable children to access a range of activities, particularly during weekends and school holidays. The staff are often required to manage competing demands, which limits opportunities for children to have individualised time and activities.

Leaders and managers do not consistently provide day-to-day direction for staff. Management presence is not always evident. Managers spend long periods of the day working from the office on the first floor, rather than being alongside staff and children. This means that managers are not always aware of the demands on staff and are not able to role model positive, informed practice.

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 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)(d))	17 July 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that those with a leadership and/or management role should be visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and/or management responsibilities. Any registered manager employed in the home should have sufficient capacity to ensure that the quality standards are met for each child in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.7)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside the home (where appropriate) and are encouraged to participate in those activities. Staff should support children to take part in school trips, out-of-school and other clubs, volunteering and leisure activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)

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: 2526435

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Shalamar Children Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 63a, Thames Industrial Estate, Princess Margaret Road, East Tilbury, Essex RM18 8RH

Responsible individual: Paul Lacy

Registered manager: Christopher Dixon

Inspectors

Harkerat Lidhar, Social Care Inspector
Deirdra Keating, Social Care Inspector

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