

2537801

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered to provide care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, there was one child living in the home with whom the inspector spoke.

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 18 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/06/2024	Full	Good
13/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/08/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved out of the home, and three children have moved in. One child was supported during a planned move. However, another child who remained in the home became unsettled, and staff struggled to help them feel safe. As a result, the child moved out of the home.

Staff understand the importance of education. Children who are not in school are supported to learn at home. Staff ensure that children have structure to their days, with weekly planners and incentives in place. One child has been supported to develop independence skills by preparing a meal planner, including budgeting, working out the amount of ingredients needed, adding to develop their own creations and recording the learning objectives and outcomes.

Children are educated about maintaining their health. Children are registered with universal health services. Staff refer to external agencies for additional support for children, including sexual health, low mood and drug and alcohol issues.

Children understand how to make complaints. Leaders and managers fully explore complaints and take action to improve how children's views are sought and listened to. A mumbles and grumbles book has been introduced for children to use.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There have been a number of serious incidents. Leaders and managers have oversight of all incidents. Management oversight is evaluative and reflective and identifies shortfalls in staff practice. However, they have not been proactive in implementing measures to prevent further incidents. One child's risks continued to escalate, and subsequently, the child moved as staff were unable to effectively support them.

Risk assessments are detailed and regularly reviewed. They consider the child's needs, factors that could increase risk and actions staff can take to minimise risk. Easy-to-follow guides have recently been implemented for staff to use to ensure they know what action they should take to keep children safe.

Allegations are dealt with efficiently. Allegations about staff members are referred to external agencies, such as the local designated safeguarding officer. Staff understand the whistle-blowing procedures. Leaders and managers follow processes for managing allegations about staff and take effective action to safeguard children.

There has been one incident involving missing medication. Medication has not been stored safely to prevent a child from having unsupervised access to it. Staff did not pick

it up at the earliest opportunity, due to a lack of regular medication checks. Leaders and managers fully investigated the incident and identified gaps in staff practice. New systems have been put in place to prevent this from happening in the future.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home's leadership has been inconsistent and unstable. Staff said they have not always felt supported or well led. The registered manager recently left following a period of absence. A new manager, who knows the home well, has been appointed and has applied to register.

Staff are provided with regular supervision sessions, which are effective and explore children's needs and progress, as well as staff emotional well-being and development. Staff are able to discuss any concerns openly without fear of judgment.

There has been a lack of stability in the staff team. Some staff have left, and new staff have been appointed. Lack of management has meant that new staff have not always been provided with the support they need. There are still staff vacancies, and other staff are due to move to another home within the company. This has impacted the stability of children living in the home.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. Leaders and managers discuss serious incidents with staff and provide an opportunity for reflective learning to improve staff practice. Leaders are clear about their expectations of staff. Team meetings are an opportunity to learn and develop staff practice to improve the care provided to children.

Leaders and managers have systems in place to review and improve the quality of care provided to children. However, reports of the quality of care are not consistently sent to the regulator. Additionally, leaders and managers do not ensure that the independent person has opportunities to talk to children and gain feedback from other professionals and family members.

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 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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; 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)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that when patterns of risk to children and gaps in staff practice are	24 October 2025

identified, they use proactive approaches to help staff recognise and minimise the risks. Leaders and managers must ensure that the home has a full staff team to provide consistent care and stability for children, as outlined in their statement of purpose.	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)) Leaders and managers must ensure that the independent person is provided opportunity to receive feedback about the home from the children, their families and other professional supporting the children.	24 October 2025
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. (Regulation 45 (1))	24 October 2025

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2537801

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Registered provider address: Exceptional Care Limited, Malthouse Business Centre,
48 Southport Road, Ormskirk L39 1QR

Responsible individual: Natalie Johnson

Registered Manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sarah Probert, Social Care Inspector

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