

2537801

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

Assurance 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.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2023.

Inspection date: 17 January 2024

Date of last inspection: 13 September 2023

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.

Inspectors have 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.

Two children have left the home since the last inspection. These moves were well planned and successful. One child wrote a letter to the manager thanking them for all their support and said, referring to themselves, 'The happy [name of child] is back all because of you.'

Since the last inspection, children have been attending education. The staff work closely with the children and others to ensure that any barriers to attending education are addressed quickly.

The home is well presented throughout. Children's bedrooms are personalised and kept tidy with support from the staff. However, there are locks on communal doors that prevent the children accessing all areas of their home. In addition, one bathroom has double access, which poses a risk to children's privacy. Senior managers stated that they will take action to resolve this quickly.

Children are building relationships with the staff; however, they will often seek out the manager for support instead. This makes it difficult for the staff to work together consistently for the children. Additionally, children do not have an advocate to support them with their views, wishes and feelings about decisions in their life.

Children's health needs are well met and the manager ensures that, when needed, appropriate referrals are made to specialised services to support children. However, when children choose to self-administer medication, staff do not ensure that this medication is stored safely.

There have been no incidents of children being reported missing from the home since the last inspection. However, clear plans remain in place and staff know what to do should a child go missing.

There has been only one incident of restraint since the last inspection. Staff are skilled at de-escalating situations and ensure that restraint is only used as a last resort to keep children safe.

There have been two allegations made by children since the last inspection. These were managed appropriately. However, not all relationships between the children and staff have been successfully repaired and the manager has not acted on feedback from children.

Requirements raised at the last inspection have been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
23/06/2021	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 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— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(g)(ii)) This relates specifically to developing the staff team to work together consistently and confidently to support the children effectively. This further relates to the manager ensuring that he has full oversight of children's experiences through their feedback and acts accordingly to address any concerns raised by children.	1 March 2024
The registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and	1 March 2024

any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—

is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;

is necessary and proportionate;

is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and

allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))

This relates specifically to locks being removed from bathroom doors.

This further relates to children having access to the downstairs bathroom from the hallway at all times and that entrance to the bathroom via the office area is prevented.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have access to appropriate advocacy support, and where possible this should be provided by a person that the child chooses, to advise them and ensure that they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person should ensure that children who wish to keep and take their own medication should be supported to ensure that this is managed safely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.16)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2537801

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Rachel Springford

Registered manager: Simon Alder

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

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