

2558681

Registered provider: Guidance Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and is registered to provide care for up to 3 children who may be experiencing social and emotional difficulties.

There were 3 children living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with 2 of the children.

The registered manager left their role in January 2026. The homes deputy manager has applied to Ofsted to register.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 April 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
---	-------------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
---	------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
---	------------

There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 27 August 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/08/2025	Full	Good
26/11/2024	Full	Good
27/02/2024	Full	Good
08/02/2023	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Weak safeguarding practices, combined with ineffective senior leadership and management oversight, have exposed children to potential risk of harm.

Senior leaders and staff did not respond appropriately to a child's allegation. They failed to follow required safeguarding procedures and did not notify the relevant safeguarding professionals, leaving the concern unaddressed.

Shortfalls have been identified in staff responses to a child going missing from the home, as well as in leaders' and managers' oversight of physical restraint records.

Some serious incidents have not been reported to Ofsted.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Poor safeguarding practice, together with ineffective leadership and management oversight of the home, has placed children at risk of harm and potentially compromised their welfare.

Despite these shortfalls, children report that they are generally happy living in the home. They describe having some positive relationships with staff. Some children have made progress in managing their emotions more effectively, are now engaging in education, and are beginning to develop aspirations for their future.

Most children's moves out of the home have been planned and have resulted in positive transitions. However, one child left the home unexpectedly after only a brief period living there. Leaders and managers have completed a detailed lessons-learned review based on this child's experience and on future placement planning, and this has been shared with the wider staff team. When a new child subsequently moved into the home, leaders and managers completed a more robust assessment.

All children have education plans in place, including voluntary work, training, or full-time school placements. Most children were observed actively engaging with their plans. One child, who is due to start their new school in the coming weeks, is currently not maintaining a positive daily routine. The child slept and played on their games console during the day, despite staff prompts to participate in in-house education activities.

Key-work sessions are detailed, and staff engage children well in discussions about risk-taking behaviours, their individual needs, and to capture their views. These sessions are also used effectively to monitor children's health needs and overall, well-being. However, children were observed vaping inside the home, which is not in line with expectations for safe behaviour. Although staff have completed initial work with them

about the risks associated with vaping, follow-up intervention has not been undertaken to address the continued vaping within the home. This gap in follow up work means that key-work sessions are not currently being used to reinforce boundaries or support children to change unsafe habits.

Children live in comfortable and welcoming home. Improvements have been made to the home environment to make sure that any damage is repaired quickly.

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

Senior leaders and staff have not followed safeguarding procedures when a child made an allegation. They have failed to notify the relevant safeguarding professionals in response to the child's allegation. This has placed a child at potential risk of harm. During day two of the inspection, senior managers have taken prompt action to address the concerns and to safeguard the child.

On one occasion, staff allowed a child, who was missing from the home, to stay overnight at an address that is in breach of their bail conditions. In addition, staff did not liaise with the placing local authority, who hold parental responsibility, before agreeing to the child remaining at this address. This does not demonstrate robust safeguarding practices.

Leaders and managers do not always evidence that they oversee individual physical restraint records to assess if incidents of restraints have been effective, necessary and proportionate. Staff do not always record the duration of the restraint used in children's records. Staff debriefs are not always conducted within regulatory timescales and for one child it was unclear if their debrief had been conducted by staff involved in the restraint. This does not promote a safe and transparent culture with regards to the recording and monitoring of physical intervention with children.

Staff have taken prompt action when there have been fires started in the home and grounds. Children have engaged in educational work about fire safety, and they are due to have a visit from the fire service. However, a follow up fire drill has not been undertaken with children since the last fire incident. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that all children understand the process in place to keep them safe.

When reviewing the premises risk assessment, the provider has not considered discussing the risks in the community with relevant professionals or children. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that the assessment includes all relevant intelligence to strengthen this document.

A complaint raised by a neighbour and a professional about a child's welfare, has been responded to promptly by leaders and managers. The concerns were reported to the appropriate people and the matter formally investigated.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and manager's oversight of safeguarding records is poor. Records relating to allegation management are minimal and do not demonstrate that a clear process has been followed. They have also failed to identify shortfalls in staff safeguarding practice in their overview of incidents and records. Consequently, no action has been taken to address staff skills, knowledge and understanding of the steps they are required to take to keep children safe.

Some serious incidents have not been reported to Ofsted and the local authority designated officer. This includes an allegation made by a child, a fire started by a child in the home's alleyway, a hoax call by a child to the fire brigade and occasions when a child has been missing from the home over 24-hours. This means that key professionals have not been provided with vital information to enable them to provide independent scrutiny to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

There have been several changes to the staff, leadership and management team. The manager requires time to stabilise the team, to ensure that children are provided with continuity of care. Staff reported positively on the team morale and current team structure. Staff are provided with training key to their roles. Some refresher training has been scheduled, and managers are exploring additional child needs led training for the staff team.

Team meetings take place every month. They are used to share lessons learned with the staff team. However, not all staff are receiving regular practice-related supervision in line with the providers own policy. Some staff have gone up to eleven weeks without formal supervision. This was a requirement at the last inspection and so it has been restated.

The independent visitor does not obtain regular feedback from staff, parents and professionals about the quality-of-care and operation of the home. The provider had identified that the report lacked sufficient detail. A new independent visitor has been recruited but at the time of this inspection they had not submitted a report with their findings. Therefore, inspectors were unable to assess if there have been improvements made to the quality of the reports.

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, 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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)) Specifically, senior leaders must ensure that they and the staff team follow appropriate safeguarding procedures and notify the relevant professionals when a child makes an allegation. Leaders and managers must ensure that staff understand their own and other professional's roles and responsibilities when making decisions about the child's care and protection.	7 June 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	7 June 2026

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; 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)(h)) Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that their oversight of safeguarding records is effective. Leaders and managers must ensure that records relating to allegation management demonstrate that a clear process has been followed. Leaders and managers must ensure that they identify shortfalls in staff safeguarding practice and take action to improve staff knowledge and understanding of how to keep children safe.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))	7 June 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— a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	7 June 2026

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 (3)(a)(iv)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
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 (2)(a))	7 June 2026
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff receive regular, practice-related supervision in line with the providers own policy.	7 June 2026
When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (2)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that when they review the location of the premises risk assessment, that they consult with relevant people.	7 June 2026

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.) Specifically, the registered person should ensure that follow up fire drills are undertaken with children following any fire safety incidents. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', Page 15, paragraph 3.9.)
- The registered person should ensure that where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, in the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. Specifically, the registered person should ensure that staff provide children with additional support to help them prepare for their daily school routines. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', Page 28, paragraph 5.15.)
- The registered person should ensure that staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. Specifically, the registered person should ensure that follow up work is undertaken to address the issue of children continuing to vape in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', Page 35, paragraph 7.18.)

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: 2558681

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Guidance Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 8 Sovereign Court, Wyrefields, Poulton Industrial Estate, Poulton-le-Fylde FY6 8JX

Responsible individual: Lorraine Anderson

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services and inspects services for children who are looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026