

2561970

Registered provider: Unity Residential Care Services Limited

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home offers care for up to three children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection. Two children spoke to the inspector.

The registered manager left their position on 2 October 2025. Two acting managers have been appointed. One manager is yet to submit her application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 14 October 2025

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place following an increase in safeguarding notifications from the provider relating to children's behaviour. In addition, Ofsted received an anonymous complaint.

Management oversight and monitoring systems are ineffective. As a result, leaders and managers do not have sufficient oversight of the care provided to children.

Staffing challenges have significantly impacted on the quality of care provided to children and at times, their safety has been compromised. This has meant that children are not always cared for by familiar staff. Additionally, staff have not always understood or felt confident in meeting the specific needs of the children they are caring for.

Supervision sessions do not always provide staff with the opportunity to reflect and discuss serious incidents and other matters affecting the home. Supervision records

vary in quality; actions raised during supervision are not always acted upon and work-related practice issues are not always thoroughly addressed.

Some external professionals report that they have not always had timely updates provided by managers and the staff team. One child's social worker had not had an outcome regarding a safeguarding concern. Leaders and managers sought clarity regarding this matter and provided the local authority with an update.

Feedback from children's social workers has varied. Each of the children's social workers acknowledged that children have experienced stability in relation to their permanence. However, one child's social worker said that staff have not always been proactive at engaging children in play and activities that encourage social development.

Management arrangements now ensure an audit of practice-related matters. This has included a review of policies and procedures. An action plan has been put in place with review timescales agreed. These are being monitored and overseen by the responsible individual.

De-escalation techniques and strategies have not been consistently implemented when children have had heightened behaviour. This has led to situations escalating, and other children in the home feeling frightened and isolated. This does not send a positive message to children that staff have the skills to support children when they are in crisis. The use of physical interventions has been safe or effective.

Children and staff have not always been provided with debriefs following physical intervention and there has not been consistent management oversight and evaluation of these incidents.

When children have made allegations and complaints to leaders and managers, they have been reassured and listened to, and their complaints have been acted upon and reported in a timely manner. One child told the inspector that they have started to see changes in the home recently and feel more confident in the management of the staff team and the changes in the home, such as new furniture and adaptations to the garden.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/06/2025	Full	Good
05/11/2024	Full	Good
04/10/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/03/2023	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 with 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 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 of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that a staff debrief and review takes place after the home's recent turbulent period.	7 December 2025

The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child’s behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child’s relevant plans; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child’s behaviour, in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child’s behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child’s age and understanding; understand how children’s previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(ix)(xi)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff have the confidence, knowledge and skills to help children manage their behaviour in line with their care plans to prevent children’s behaviour from escalating. Additionally, staff must have the skills to de-escalate behaviour which is damaging or violent in a way that does	7 December 2025
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not cause further distress or harm to the child or children living in the home. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; 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; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(e)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that children are safe from harm at all times.	7 December 2025

Additionally, that staff encourage positive interactions between children living in the home and manage these relationships in line with children's individual risk assessments.	
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*This requirement is subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2561970

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Unity Residential Care Services Limited

Registered provider address: 2 Lyme vale Court, Lyme Drive, Parklands, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 6NW

Responsible individual: Emmaline Scoular

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Michelle Greenhalgh, Social Care Inspector

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