

2577151

Registered provider: Cedarways Residential Child Care Larkhill House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private limited company owns this home. It provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2025. She is working towards a level 5 management qualification.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living at the home. All children were spoken with and contributed their views.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 November 2025

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: 18 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2025	Full	Good
03/01/2024	Full	Good
10/01/2023	Full	Good
21/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home. The child's move into semi-independent accommodation was well planned, and staff helped the child to personalise their new home. Staff keep in touch with the child, which demonstrates commitment to the child's well-being.

Children have a long-term stable home. One child has lived at the home for three years. Two children have lived there for 18 and 20 months. Children say they like living at the home and that they like the staff. All children say they have staff who they especially like and who they feel know them well.

Children are making good progress from their individual starting points. All children are growing in confidence, and staff are supporting children to develop key independence skills that will help them in later life.

A therapeutic approach is embedded into staff practice. Managers and staff work closely with the home's therapist to understand children's emotional needs. When necessary, staff receive additional training from the therapist that enables them to understand how to support children with these needs. Staff regularly have supportive conversations with children about their emotional responses. This empathetic care supports children through difficult times and promotes their emotional resilience.

Staff work closely with teachers to support children's academic progress and overcome their barriers to learning. One child's teacher said that close partnership working enables teachers and staff to deliver a safe and consistent message. The same child's social worker described the support for their child's education as 'phenomenal'.

Children are well supported to spend time with people who are important to them. Where appropriate, staff work in partnership with children's families to re-establish and progress children's time with them.

Children's identities and individuality are valued. They attend clubs, such as youth club and gymnastic club. This supports children's interests and enables them to make friends in the local community. Children enjoy positive experiences with staff, including going on holiday. One child completed a 60-mile sponsored walk, in stages, with staff to raise funds for their chosen charity. These experiences create positive shared memories and strong bonds with staff.

Children have many opportunities to share their views in day-to-day conversations and in planned meetings. However, one child has not been offered the services of an advocate. This compromises the available opportunities for this child to share their views and directly influence aspects of their care.

The clean and welcoming home environment supports children's comfort and sense of belonging. Children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their tastes and interests. This allows children to take pride in their home and promotes their well-being and sense of belonging. However, visible locks on cupboards in communal areas detract from the homely feel and compromise children's enjoyment of it.

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

Staff know the individual therapeutic strategies to support children when they are upset or angry. Risk management plans, reviewed by the therapist, are based on the home's therapeutic model and provide staff with clear guidance to manage risks and respond to complex behaviours. Children are also engaged in creating their own safety plans. Therefore, children feel protected and better understand how to keep themselves safe.

Strong routines and boundaries and supportive nurturing relationships with staff help children to feel safe and secure. This supports children to become increasingly able to regulate their emotions. One social worker said that since living at the home their child 'seems happier and more regulated. This is a testament to the quality of relationships'. On the rare occasion when staff physically intervene to keep children safe, it is necessary and proportionate. Staff discuss incidents with children, and management oversight is effective, ensuring that children are safe and supported.

When children go missing from the home, staff follow children's plans and work with partner agencies to ensure that children are returned to the home safely. Staff speak to children to understand why they have gone missing, and they work with them to help them make safer choices. One child has recently gone missing from the home on two occasions without staff's knowledge. The child had not previously gone missing. The circumstances were different for the incidents, and managers updated guidance to staff on each occasion.

When children's risks in the community increase, managers work in partnership with safeguarding agencies. They attend multi-agency meetings and implement agreed plans. Staff understand the push factors that encourage children to take risks in the community. They work hard to keep children positively engaged and balance supporting children to have age-appropriate experiences with strategies to keep children safe.

When children make allegations of harm against staff working at the home, managers do not always notify the regulator. This limits the regulator's ability to maintain independent oversight of the home.

Children are sometimes unkind to one another, and they provoke arguments with other children they live with. Staff manage these relationships through close supervision and arranging separate activities. They also help children talk things through with each other to help repair their relationship. However, staff do not consistently educate children about bullying or unkind behaviour or support them to reflect on its impact on themselves or others.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager holds the children at the centre of her decision-making and advocates for them to ensure that they have what they need to thrive. The manager is supported by a responsible individual who is well known to the children because she is in the home regularly.

The manager is skilled at building positive working relationships with partner agencies. This promotes partnership working and ensures that children receive the correct support. Professionals speak positively about the manager and identify communication as a key strength. One child's social worker said that the manager is open to working through any difficulties in relationships with family members in the best interest of the child.

Leaders and managers have effective oversight of all aspects of children's care. They continually audit all aspects of children's care to identify areas for improvement and to strengthen staff practice. The learning culture they are developing is supporting children's progress and enhancing their experiences.

Staff say that moral is good, and they enjoy working at the home. They receive regular supervision, a probation period and an annual appraisal. New staff receive a well-planned induction that includes twice-monthly formal supervision. Staff say that the manager is 'supportive and patient' and 'great with children'.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive range of training, including face-to-face training in safeguarding, self-harm and ligature, and first aid and medication. Staff also participate in workshops with the company therapist that address children's individual needs. Staff say that they find training helpful and can identify how it informs their practice. As a result, children are cared for by staff who understand their roles and responsibilities and provide good quality care.

Managers ensure that systems are in place to ensure that staff are recruited safely. However, on one occasion, they were not sufficiently vigilant when considering information in an employer's reference for one new member of staff. This was a minor point and did not impact on the care or safety of children.

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 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. (Regulation 40 (4)(c)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that Ofsted is informed of all allegations made by children against a person working in the home.	4 January 2026

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. Looked-after children are entitled to an independent advocate 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 the home is a homely, nurturing and supportive environment for children. Specifically, visible locks on doors in communal areas give the home an institutional feel, and they should be minimised or removed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraphs 3.9 and 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that children are supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged. Poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)
- The registered person should maintain good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2577151

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cedarways Residential Child Care Larkhill House Limited

Registered provider address: 33 Stapenhill Road, Burton-on-Trent, Staffordshire
DE15 9AE

Responsible individual: Karmen Buckerfield

Registered manager: Rebecca Austin

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

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