

2583028

Registered provider: The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to four children between five and 17 years. According to the home's statement of purpose, specialist therapeutic care is provided to children who are deaf and have complex needs. Two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. Both children spoke with the inspector.

There has been no registered manager since 30 April 2025. The responsible individual intends to apply to Ofsted to be the registered manager. Another senior leader has been identified to fulfil the role of the responsible individual. At the time of this inspection, applications have not been submitted to Ofsted. However, leaders and managers were able to demonstrate that applications are in progress.

Inspection date: 12 August 2025

This monitoring visit

The home was judged to be requires improvement to be good at the full inspection in April 2025. In July 2025, serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children were identified at an assurance inspection. As a result, a compliance notice was issued to the provider under regulation 13, the leadership and management standard. This monitoring visit was carried out to determine the progress that has been made towards addressing the actions set in the compliance notice.

Leaders and managers have taken action to meet the compliance notice. Some actions are ongoing or are in their infancy, so are yet to be robustly tested for efficacy. As a result, three of the four requirements that were raised at the last inspection have been restated. In addition, a recommendation has been added.

Leaders and managers are open to reflection, challenge and learning. Leaders explain that they are aiming for holistic and meaningful improvements to be made to the quality of care that is provided to children. As a result, external consultants have

been commissioned to support the home's wider improvement journey. The management arrangements for the home have also been reviewed and adjusted. This has helped leaders and managers to increase their oversight and support children's care needs.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home. The two children who have remained in the home say that they enjoy living there. They explain that they get on well with each other and the staff, although staff's ability to use British Sign Language (BSL) varies.

Leaders support staff to develop their communication skills. Staff are all working towards qualifications in BSL. Staff are also supported to consider the wider cultural issues that are experienced by the deaf community. As a result, staff are more able to appreciate some of the barriers that children may encounter in their lives and how these can be challenged and overcome.

Staff say that they feel supported by leaders and managers and that there has been a positive shift in the morale of the team. Leaders and managers are in the process of concluding their investigation into a whistleblowing concern that was received before the assurance inspection. Further investigations into the conduct of staff and their suitability to work with children are ongoing. Suitable safety measures have been implemented, although final outcomes are yet to be agreed and shared.

Supervision sessions provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on their role and the personal support that they require. Staff training and development needs are also considered so that staff are equipped to meet children's needs effectively. Relevant staff training courses have been booked.

As children approach adulthood, staff support them to navigate this transition and provide opportunities to help them to develop the skills that they will likely need in the future. This includes spending increased time with their friends and in the community. One child explained that they would like more independence, although they recognise some of the barriers to this. Leaders and managers explained that children are supported to become more independent, in line with their ability to demonstrate that they can make safe choices. One child's friends visited the home during the inspection and staff spent time getting to know them, as a good parent would.

Staff say that children's plans help them to understand children's needs. However, some important information about how staff support children is missing. Conversely, safety plans provide a clear overview of risk-taking behaviour and how staff respond to reduce the risk of harm to help children to stay safe.

Staff use de-escalation strategies to support children to express themselves in safer ways. After incidents occur staff help children to understand the risks that they have been exposed to and how they could respond differently in the future. However, some consequences that are issued to children are not restorative in nature. As a

result, children are not always supported to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves or others.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/04/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/06/2024	Full	Good
21/11/2023	Full	Outstanding
06/09/2022	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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) In particular, when concerns are raised about members of staff, conduct procedures should be completed and information shared with external organisations.	1 September 2025
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)) In particular, ensure that staff develop their knowledge of deaf awareness and have the skills and confidence to support the use of sign language in the home.	1 September 2025

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; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; 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)(b)(c)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))	1 September 2025
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. In particular, consequences used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in

nature. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: 2583028

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

Registered provider address: The Deaf Academy, 1 Douglas Avenue, Exmouth, Devon EX8 2AU

Responsible individual: James Heaver

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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