

2604092

Registered provider: Phoenix Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private provider. It can provide care for up to two children who may experience emotional or social difficulties. At the time of inspection, one child was living at the home.

The registered manager is currently on maternity leave. The acting manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Staff in the home are referred to as adults. This is reflected in this report.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 September 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2024	Full	Good
21/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/06/2022	Full	Good
09/11/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children have moved on from the home and two children have moved into the home since the previous inspection. Three children's placements have ended unexpectedly. Leaders and managers recognised that they could not meet their needs.

The child currently living at the home is starting to build trusting relationships with the team. It is clear that the child wants to spend time with the adults and is starting to express their feelings to them. The child rated their home as 'nearly a 10 out of 10' and did not have any suggestions for improvements. Adults have worked hard to help the child to express themselves and understand how the child is feeling. For example, the adults know how the child is feeling by the choice of music they play. This helps the child to express themselves without having to use words.

All the children have had their education disrupted. The home has challenged decisions about the children's education and advocated strongly for them. The child living at the home continued their education over the summer holidays with tutoring. The home provided educational activities to support them to feel more confident. A formal complaint was made for another child in relation to their education. When children have been out of education, adults have offered children educational activities.

Children's experiences of moving into the home have been mixed. For one child, planning did not consider the adults' skill sets to meet the child's needs. The learning from one child was that the team had struggled with physical interventions. Prior to the next child moving in, managers identified that the team had experience in this area. However, the team did not have the expertise to support the second child effectively. Changes have been made to admissions processes, planning for the child currently living in the home was more detailed and considered. There was a clearer alignment between the child's needs and skills of the team.

Children's health needs are carefully managed and understood. Specific training from medical professionals took place before the child currently living in the home moved in. This increased the adults' confidence in managing the child's health needs.

Children have fun-filled days, with activities being planned for them. A memory book for the child captures their experiences well.

The home environment is much like a family home. There are some aspects of the home which are outdated but it has a family feel. It is encouraging to see the child putting their own stamp on the home and photos displayed around the home to celebrate the child. Window restrictors are in place with no assessed need. This detracts from the otherwise homely feel.

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

The adults understand risks to the children well. Guidance to the team is clear about the risks and adults know the processes to follow. Adults have close working relationships with the key professionals in the children's lives. This helps the adults to understand risks more and how to help keep children safe.

Plans for when children go missing from the home are clear. Train times to possible locations are provided so adults would know how to check this. One child, who has moved on from the home, was repeatedly missing from the home. The team's response to these incidents was considered and nurturing. For example, adults took the child fresh clothes and checked in with them regularly. All professionals were notified quickly and agencies worked together. The team was quick to search for the child and notify train and coach stations in efforts to find them. Return home conversations were requested in line with statutory guidance. An independent person spoke to the child about their reasons for leaving the home.

Positive behaviours are promoted. The team has attempted to establish consistent boundaries. This has not always worked, and, at times, a lack of consistency has led to incidents increasing.

Restraint has been used for two of the children who previously lived in the home, and, at high levels of frequency. The high number of restraints was due to the team's inability to manage behaviour without these. The recordings of the restraints are highly detailed. Each incident is reviewed by the manager. There is a focus on understanding why the child may have acted or behaved in a certain way. However, there is a lack of management review of what adults could have done differently. Adults have struggled; on occasions, they did not restrain the child correctly, meaning that adults were harmed as a result.

Staff have completed repeated restraint training, although managers have not addressed poor practice sufficiently. For example, adults speak to children after restraints and the conversations are sensitive. Sometimes these conversations have been undertaken by a person directly involved in the incident. At other times, the conversations have been delayed. This has meant important opportunities for learning have been lost. When concerns have been raised about adults' practice, these have been reported quickly. However, internal investigations do not outline the actions needed for practice to improve. Children are supported to understand the outcomes of the concerns raised and there is an emphasis on repairing relationships.

Adults understand one child's health needs well and how to support their medication. The home environment is safe for this child.

Safer recruitment processes are in place. This means that leaders can make safer decisions about who is employed in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There have been recent changes of manager. The registered manager is on maternity leave, and a new manager has joined and has applied to register with Ofsted. Managers know the children well. The acting manager has a good relationship with the child in the home. They have high aspirations for the child and have advocated strongly on their behalf.

The main concerns relate to the children who have had to move on from the home. Managers were quick to act when the home could not meet these children's needs. There has been learning from this, but managers have not clearly addressed the practice concerns. This limits the improvements the team can make. The team has been unstable until recently. The child currently living in the home is experiencing a more stable and cohesive team.

Leaders and managers have not reviewed care effectively. Patterns and trends of incidents are not identified. There is little consideration as to when incidents have occurred, the time of day or whether the same adult is involved, for example. This lack of review means concerns are not addressed. Improvements to the care the children have received were not made. Records of individual incidents indicate that adults have struggled but do not detail what is needed to improve. Some training has been put in place, but this is limited.

Senior leaders did act quickly when one child was not receiving the level of care needed. Support was put into place to move the child on from the home quickly. Changes have been made, with admissions processes being more thorough as a result.

Adults currently feel supported, and supervision takes place regularly. Team meetings and reflective sessions offer opportunities to consider the children's needs. Professionals speak highly of the good communication they receive.

Practice has not consistently reflected that set out in the home's statement of purpose. Reviews of this document need to clarify the purpose of care and arrangements for staffing.

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— 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)) This means that leaders and managers should review incidents and care effectively. When shortfalls are identified, actions must be put in place to address practice and improve care.	14 November 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.	14 November 2025

(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))

This means that clear and robust processes are in place for children moving into the home. The registered person must ensure that the team has the skills, experience and expertise to meet the needs of each child.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the reasons for any restrictions or monitoring in the home environment are recorded clearly. In particular, window restrictors should only be used where there is an assessed need. Timescales and mechanisms for review should be specified and children's individual views on these measures should be recorded. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that incidents of restraint are reviewed to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of every child. Consideration should be given as to the best placed person to discuss the restraint with the child after the event. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that the statement of purpose is child focused and indicates how the home provides individualised care for each child. It should be kept up to date and reflect the staffing levels actually being provided. Updates should be sent to Ofsted within 28 days of review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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: 2604092

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Phoenix Childcare Ltd

Registered provider address: Support Hub Unit 5 Chinon Court, Lower Moor Way,
Tiverton Devon EX16 6SS

Responsible individual: Thomas Robins

Registered manager: Sophie Hughes

Inspector

Nickie Doney, Social Care Inspector

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