

2729367

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager has the relevant experience and is qualified.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 August 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: 4 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/11/2024	Full	Good
24/01/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, two children have moved into the home, and one child has moved out. At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. All three children spoke with the inspector.

Staff support children's health needs through careful planning and effective communication with external providers. They ensure that children attend routine health appointments and, where necessary, seek specialist help, including referrals for counselling. This multi-agency approach to care ensures that children's holistic needs are met.

All three children are currently in education and maintain good attendance. Open lines of communication with their schools enable staff to remain highly attuned and responsive to any barriers the children may face in their learning. For example, the manager has referred one child to an education specialist to support their individual educational needs. This ensures early identification and targeted support, enabling the child to receive tailored interventions that enhance their learning experience and promote positive educational outcomes.

Children take part in a range of activities, including bowling, horse riding, and day trips to explore new places and environments. Photos show them enjoying each other's company and sharing positive experiences, such as spending time together in the garden and enjoying a barbecue. These activities support children's social development, strengthen their relationships, and help build confidence by exposing them to new experiences in a fun and supportive setting.

Children spend time with their families and other people who are important to them. Staff support children in contributing to decisions about these arrangements and actively seek their views. This helps children stay connected with those who are significant in their lives. One parent said, 'When I see [name of child] with the staff, they are just brilliant.'

The manager admitted two children into the home without fully assessing their individual needs or considering how their arrival might affect the children already living there. Although this has not had a detrimental impact, it highlights a lack of thorough planning and risk assessment by leaders, which undermines safe and well-considered placement decisions.

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

Children trust staff. They say they enjoy living at the home and know they can approach staff if they have any worries. One child said, 'The staff are like a big family.'

There have been no episodes of children going missing from the home. This reflects the positive and trusting relationships that staff have developed with the children. Staff understand how to keep children safe, and there are effective missing-from-home plans in place, with clear guidance on the actions staff should take if a child were to go missing.

Disclosures and complaints are managed well. The manager ensures that children are safe and protected from harm and keeps them informed of outcomes. These actions help children feel confident in raising concerns and contribute to their sense of safety.

When children hurt themselves, staff respond promptly with compassionate care and make referrals to specialist agencies for additional support. This approach fosters a non-judgemental environment where children feel safe to seek help and demonstrates a strong commitment to both the immediate and long-term well-being of children.

Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention and apply it only as a last resort to protect children and others from harm. Following any incident, both children and staff are spoken to, ensuring that everyone involved has the opportunity to reflect and learn from the experience.

Staff do not consistently speak to children about their behaviours, how to manage their emotions, or how to take responsibility for their actions. This is a missed opportunity to help children understand their feelings, build emotional resilience and learn from their experiences. As a result, children are not well supported to manage challenges effectively.

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

The registered manager is experienced and dedicated and is supported by a capable and committed deputy manager. Both leaders know the children well and adopt a child-centred approach. Staff report that they enjoy working at the home and feel well supported by the manager.

Leaders' and managers' monitoring and review systems are ineffective. For example, several gaps were identified in recording practices. Children's incident forms and records of key-work sessions are not consistently updated. Furthermore, discussions with professionals are not always documented, highlighting further discrepancies. Managers do not demonstrate sufficient professional curiosity when reviewing and evaluating incidents. As a result, they have failed to identify shortfalls in staff practice and have not consistently taken the necessary steps to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. This has led to inconsistencies in the delivery of high-quality care. Recording was identified as a shortfall at the last inspection and remains a concern.

In addition to the above, while the manager updates the home's statement of purpose, the revised document is not submitted to the regulator in line with regulatory requirements. The manager's six-monthly quality of care review report does not include

a plan of action to improve the quality of care provided to children. This shortfall was identified at the last inspection and remains unresolved.

Children are not consistently supported in line with their required staff ratios. For example, on two occasions, children were not adequately supported due to insufficient staffing in relation to the required staff-to-child ratio. This has the potential to compromise the safety, supervision and overall quality of care delivered to children and undermines their trust in caregivers.

On one occasion, leaders failed to notify the police and the local authority designated officer of a serious incident within the required timeframe. This delay compromised the timeliness of the safeguarding response and hindered coordinated intervention.

Team meetings and supervision sessions are held monthly. The manager also ensures that staff performance is appraised annually. These practices help to ensure that staff are well supported in their roles and in their ongoing professional development.

Staff receive regular training to ensure they have the skills and competencies required to meet the diverse needs of the children in their care. Systems are in place to ensure that training is routinely updated and refreshed.

External professionals and parents of children report that communication with the manager and staff is exceptionally strong.

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— 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; 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)(d)(h)) This specifically relates to ensuring that there is adequate staff-to-child ratio on duty at all times and that the home's monitoring systems are clear and effective.	8 September 2025
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	8 September 2025

In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children's records are up to date, are clearly written and factual, and that each record is appropriately signed and dated. The requirement is restated.	
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities, and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c) (3)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that there is a clear action plan to make improvements to the quality of children's care. The requirement is restated.	8 September 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff engage with children in a supportive manner, helping them to understand and manage their emotions, while educating them about the consequences of their behaviour in a constructive and restorative way. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)
- The registered person should ensure that all relevant persons are notified within the required timescales of regulation 40 when a serious incident occurs involving a child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: 2729367

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Place Young People's Company

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

Responsible individual: Emma Shea

Registered manager: Thomas Griffiths

Inspector

Jas Nahar, Social Care Inspector
Pavandeep Khosa, Inspector Assistant – West Midlands Region

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