

2783593

Registered provider: The Acorns Leicester Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home. They were spoken to as part of the inspection.

At the time of this inspection, there was no registered manager leading the home.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 April 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

inadequate

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 24 November 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/11/2025	Full	Good
06/05/2025	Full	Inadequate

Summary of findings

Staff take appropriate action to safeguard children. However, children are not consistently supported to understand how to keep themselves safe. Records of incidents often lack clarity, making it difficult to evaluate actions taken by staff. Additionally, the appropriate assessments are not routinely carried out when new children come to live at the home. This results, at times, in incompatible placements and escalation of behaviours between children with similar risks. Oversight by managers has not always been strong, which has reduced the effectiveness of monitoring the quality of care being provided. Although there have been changes in the management team, the new management team have not been proactive in implementing plans to address identified concerns.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Two children had moved into the home since the last inspection, and one child had left the home. Their experiences were considered during this inspection. The home environment is clean and free from identified hazards. However, the home lacks warmth and personalisation for children. Managers have recognised this and initial steps have been taken to improve the environment for the benefit of children.

Children are comfortable in their home. They have good relationships with staff and can identify staff they can talk to if they have any worries or concerns. For example, one child was seen singing with a staff member, showcasing their talent and reflecting their sense of ease in the home. Children said that they feel safe.

An external professional provided positive feedback about the care provided to their child. They said the child they have responsibility for is safe living in the home and incidents of going missing from home are managed well.

Children's wishes and feelings are gathered daily, ensuring their views are sought and valued. Children are involved in their care planning and are encouraged to share how they would like to be supported by staff. One child said they feel staff listen and understand them well.

Some records relating to children are missing or are not readily accessible, meaning there are gaps in children's recorded history. Should children wish to access their records, important information about their lives and experiences may not be available or retained by the provider.

When children move into the home, the assessment to review their compatibility to live with other children is not routinely undertaken by managers and staff. This limits the opportunity to evaluate the compatibility of children living together and ensure that staff

have the necessary knowledge and skills to support children. For example, 2 children with similar risks were placed together, which resulted in an escalation of behaviours which had a negative impact on a child.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

When children go missing from home, staff take appropriate action in line with children's missing-from-care protocols. Staff carry out searches to try and locate children and notify police when required. Staff engage with children sensitively to explore their reasons for going missing and identify how they can be better supported to reduce the likelihood of further missing-from-home incidents.

When children have been held by staff, this has been appropriate and proportionate to the circumstances, on most occasions. Children are offered time and space, following such incidents, to reflect on and share how being held made them feel. When children choose not to engage, records demonstrate that they have still been given the opportunity to express their feelings and emotions. However, management oversight is not consistent and does not always provide sufficient evaluation as to whether the child needed to be held and if the hold was appropriate.

Children's relevant plans are sufficiently detailed and include information regarding their risks and vulnerabilities and how staff should support them and keep them safe. However, these are not reviewed and updated following concerns. As a result, risk assessments are not always up to date with the most relevant information to inform staff care practice. This is an area for development.

Children are not consistently engaged in ongoing conversations about keeping safe. Staff engage with children following incidents of concern, exploring worries and offering support in those moments. However, these discussions are not embedded in daily staff care. Opportunities to support children to understand and manage risks are limited.

Written records are often difficult to follow, with relevant information held in different locations, which impacts clarity and accessibility. Incident logs are not always clear on the actions staff have taken to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Since the last inspection, the registered manager and responsible individual have left the home. The registered provider delayed informing Ofsted of the changes to the management team. This hindered external oversight and assurance in relation to who was overseeing the day-to-day running of the home. A new deputy manager and responsible individual have now been appointed and taken up their roles.

Management oversight of children's files and relevant documents is not consistent. This limits independent scrutiny of staff care practice and areas for development. The new

manager and responsible individual have identified shortfalls in relation to the oversight of quality assurance. However, they have not yet implemented plans to address these.

Staff supervision is not consistently undertaken in line with the home's policy. When supervision has taken place, staff are given opportunities to reflect on their care practice and consider areas for development. The managers have implemented an action plan to address the shortfall in staff supervision, however, this is yet to be embedded.

Staff are up to date with mandatory training, including in safeguarding children. They have not yet received training specific to the individual needs of children, such as exploitation and substance misuse. This limits staff's ability to fully understand and respond effectively to children's risks.

Safer recruitment practice is not yet sufficiently rigorous. For example, records relating to one member of staff were not available to confirm that all safer recruitment checks had been completed. Furthermore, safer recruitment records are not stored in a way that allows for independent access for review.

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 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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that risk assessments are updated and reviewed when reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant to children's needs. They should ensure that children are supported to develop the skills and knowledge to keep themselves safe. The registered person should ensure that staff have appropriate training to meet the	11 June 2026

needs of children they are caring for, such as substance misuse and exploitation.	
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; 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that oversight is consistent throughout children's files. They should ensure that any shortfalls are addressed without delay and action plans are implemented. They should ensure that the regulator is informed without delay of any changes to the management team and provide information on who is overseeing the home.	11 June 2026
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).	21 May 2026

The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that all safer recruitment checks are completed and records are easily accessible for independent review.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;	11 June 2026

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that details of physical interventions are clear in records. They should ensure oversight of any physical interventions to review whether they were appropriate.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff are receiving supervision in line with the home's policy.	11 June 2026

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Staff should understand their important role in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear

recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2783593

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Acorns Leicester Limited

Registered provider address: 50 Dalby Avenue, Bushby, Leicester LE7 9RD

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Jess Baines, Social Care Inspector
Siobhan Holmes, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026