

2798304

Registered provider: Gratia Cura Residential Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three children who experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home.

The home registered with Ofsted in November 2024. There has been no registered manager since February 2025. The manager at the time of the inspection was due to leave the home in January 2026.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 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: 9 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

A full inspection was carried out in April 2025, and the home was judged inadequate due to concerns about the provider's ability to safeguard children. Ofsted issued a notice suspending the registration of the home. This prevented the provider from moving any children into the home. A monitoring visit took place in June 2025. The provider demonstrated that they had complied with the suspension notice and had met all the relevant requirements set at the full inspection. The suspension notice was lifted following this visit.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/04/2025	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child has been making steady progress at the home. Managers ensured that there was a clear transition plan from the previous home, so that the child's move into the home was positive. Staff demonstrated sensitivity and attentiveness to her wishes and feelings, particularly in relation to providing activities that she enjoys. Thoughtful arrangements were made to help her settle into the home. Staff work collaboratively with external agencies to support the child's progress.

There is a sharp focus on ensuring that the child has suitable educational opportunities. She does not currently attend an education setting, and managers are working closely with the child's placing authority to address this. In the meantime, staff are supporting the child to engage with the AQA award scheme. The child has been awarded several certificates. This is helping to build her confidence and maintain educational momentum.

The child's health needs are recognised and are being met. Staff are helping the child to establish a healthier sleep pattern to ensure that she has sufficient rest. They are also providing support to meet her dietary needs, while being sensitive to her preferences.

The child can communicate verbally but prefers to communicate using Makaton and British Sign Language. The staff team had not previously received training in these communication methods, and this has led to some frustration for the child. She has been teaching staff how to sign, and formal training has now been arranged.

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

Staff work together effectively to keep the child safe. The child's plans are clear and individualised, and guide staff in understanding how to protect the child from harm, in the home and in the community. These plans include adaptive strategies tailored to specific situations. Updates to these plans are recorded promptly on the electronic system, and staff are required to read and acknowledge any changes. This ensures a consistent and informed approach to safeguarding.

The child has been encouraged to participate in community-based activities, with risk management strategies in place. Initially, she struggled to adjust to her new environment, which led to an increase in risk-taking behaviours. In response, staff adapted the activity schedule to reduce pressure and to support her ability to regulate her emotions. This has resulted in improved emotional stability and the development of positive relationships with staff. During the inspection, the child enjoyed a visit to an animal sanctuary and lunch at a local restaurant, an encouraging sign of growing confidence and independence.

When the child first moved into the home, she was unsettled and went missing from home, particularly during outdoor activities. On one occasion, when the child refused to

return home, staff demonstrated resilience and commitment by walking the streets through the night to maintain visual contact and ensure her safety.

There have been incidents in the local community when staff were unable to fully support the child, resulting in complaints. Work is ongoing to help the child to understand the impact of her behaviour on others and to promote more positive engagement with the community.

Since changes were made to the child's community activities, there have been no further incidents of her going missing from home. A thorough risk assessment led to the decision to restrict the child's access to a mobile phone, which has reduced the risk of online harm.

Allegations against staff are taken seriously and investigated thoroughly. Staff are supported to reflect on incidents with an external psychologist. Learning from these reflections is then embedded in daily practice.

Staff have not needed to use physical restraint to manage the child's behaviour. Instead, they use language that is sensitive to the child's emotional needs, which has proved to be effective in maintaining safety and promoting trust.

A court order is currently in place to help to keep the child safe. The specific requirements of the order were having a negative impact on the working environment for night staff. Managers responded appropriately by listening to staff concerns and they have subsequently made the necessary adjustments to the environment, while maintaining the child's safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection and subsequent monitoring visit, leaders and managers have taken effective action to raise the standards of care in the home. They have recruited new staff and implemented a programme of intensive training to ensure that the team is equipped to meet the needs of children. Staff are supported to work together well as a team. Their contributions are recognised and celebrated through initiatives such as a monthly staff newsletter.

Leaders and managers have demonstrated a strong capacity for reflection and improvement. Initially, the child's complex needs were not fully understood, and staff lacked the specific skills required to meet these needs. Leaders responded swiftly by reviewing and adapting the child's care and behaviour management plans. This demonstrated a good level of insight and a commitment to timely, tailored interventions that have contributed to the child's increased sense of safety and emotional stability. However, not all serious events have been reported to the regulator in a timely way.

Staff have shown a clear commitment to professional development and reflective practice. They are actively engaged in developing their understanding of the child's needs and are supported by managers to do so. Plans are in place to provide further

training to enhance staff communication with the child, ensuring that care is both effective and empathetic.

Regular supervision and team meetings provide structured opportunities for staff to explore their understanding of risk, reflect on their practice and ensure consistency in care delivery.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))	20 February 2026
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	20 February 2026

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 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; 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)(c)(f)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s 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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(b))	20 February 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. The system should cover the action that should be followed if the event arises at the weekend or on a public holiday. Notification must include details of the action taken by the home’s staff in response to the event. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 63, paragraph 14.13)

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: 2798304

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gratia Cura Residential Ltd

Registered provider address: 6 Park Road, Didcot OX11 8QW

Responsible individual: Timothy Kosmala

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Shaheda Dhandia, Social Care Inspector

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