

# 2807623

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider and offers care for up to two children with children with complex needs who require specialist support.

The manager left in October 2025.

**Inspection date:** 22 October 2025

**Date of last inspection:** 4 June 2025

**Judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

## Findings from the inspection

We identified serious and widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. They did not directly contribute to the inspection. However, the inspector observed the child being supported by staff.

Since the last full inspection, one child has moved out and one child has moved in. The child who moved out did so in an emergency, as staff were unable to meet the requirements of the child's court order. The child did not have a planned end to their time at the home.

The registered manager left the home at the beginning of October 2025. However, they were absent from the home for a period before this date. The responsible individual has been providing support to the staff. The responsible individual is contracted to work one day a week. Therefore, there is limited management oversight and no clear leadership for the staff.

Since the last full inspection, several staff have left their roles, including the previous registered manager. This has led to a heavy reliance on agency staff. Newly appointed staff have been paired with agency staff members. The combination of inexperience has led to the child's risks not being fully understood or effectively responded to. Changes in staff and managers have resulted in an inexperienced staff team that provides inconsistent and unsafe care.

On one occasion, the child managed to obtain the home's car keys. Due to this, protective measures were agreed to prevent a reoccurrence. Despite a considerable risk for the child, the protective measures were not implemented or detailed in the child's risk management plans. This resulted in the child being able to take the home's car keys again. The child drove the car and consequently crashed the vehicle. This left the child at risk of significant harm.

Staff do not have the skills and experience to manage the child's complex behaviour. Staff do not always intervene or use approved strategies to de-escalate behaviours. On one occasion, following significant damage to the home, the fire alarm was triggered. Staff evacuated the home, leaving the child inside, despite being unsure if there was a fire. There was a 25-minute delay in the emergency services being called. This delay had the potential to leave the child at risk of significant harm.

The child's risks are not well documented or understood. Risk management plans do not provide staff with clear guidance and strategies to manage the child's complex behaviours. Additionally, risk management plans are not updated after significant incidents. This has the potential to result in staff providing inconsistent responses.

The child regularly goes missing from the home. The missing-from-care protocols have not always been followed. On one occasion, there was over two hours before staff reported the child missing from home to the relevant authorities. This does not ensure that the measures to keep the child safe are consistently followed by staff.

On one occasion, staff were aware that the child was smoking cannabis in their bedroom. Staff did not intervene and failed to seek medical attention for the child. Despite it being known that the child regularly smokes cannabis, these incidents are not recorded. This does not provide appropriate oversight or monitor the child's health and well-being.

Staff use consequences to encourage positive behaviour. The monitoring of these measures is ineffective. Records do not always include information on the effectiveness of the measure used. The child's views relating to the measure are not always obtained. Management oversight of this is inconsistent. This does not ensure proportionality or consistency for the child.

Some areas of the home need repair. There was a large hole in the child's bedroom wall and desk. The child had been smoking in their bedroom. The damage to the child's room has not been responded to promptly. This does not ensure the child lives in a homely environment.

Management oversight regarding incidents, complaints and consequences lacks detail and professional curiosity, and it fails to evaluate any necessary actions. As a result, staff have not been offered opportunities to learn from their practice and make improvements.

Leaders and managers had not identified the gap in staff training in order to meet the needs of the child. The lack of effective monitoring and oversight does not ensure that staff have the required skills and knowledge to respond effectively to all the child's complex needs and vulnerabilities.

Staff have not received regular supervision sessions or team meetings since the last full inspection. A new member of staff has had one supervision since they started in August 2025, and other staff members have not received supervision for four months. This does not ensure that staff are supported with opportunities to develop their practice.

Leaders and managers have not always notified Ofsted regarding serious incidents, and other notifications have been received late. Additionally, the manager's review of care has not been submitted by the provider. This limits Ofsted's ability to monitor the service effectively.

Due to the concerns regarding the management arrangements and the care and safety of children, a decision was made to serve a restriction of accommodation notice. This notice prevents the provider from moving any further children into the home. The requirement made at the last full inspection was met, and seven requirements were set at this inspection.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 04/06/2025      | 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 within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                 | Due date               |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| <p>*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)(b))</p> <p>In particular:</p> <p>ensure that children's risk assessments are up to date and reviewed when new risks are identified;</p> <p>ensure that staff understand the risks to the child and take effective action to keep the child safe;</p> | <p>3 December 2025</p> |

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| <p>ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities in line with seeking necessary emergency service support if deemed necessary; and</p> <p>ensure risk-reduction measures set in children's relevant plans are followed by staff.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               |                        |
| <p>*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>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; and</p> <p>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)(d)(e)(f)(h))</p> <p>In particular:</p> <p>ensure that managers review and evaluate monitoring arrangements for the home;</p> <p>ensure that there is appropriate and sufficient managerial day-to- day oversight of the home;</p> | <p>3 December 2025</p> |

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| <p>ensure that managers take action when identifying necessary improvements and that these are put into place;</p> <p>ensure that management oversight, review and monitoring of risk assessments, complaints, consequences and incident reports are thorough, and when necessary action is needed, this is put in place;</p> <p>ensure that staff receive regular supervision in line with the home's statement of purpose; and</p> <p>ensure that all staff have the necessary training in child criminal exploitation, fire prevention and substance misuse.</p>              |                 |
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1) (2)(c)(f))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that children's bedrooms are in good condition and repairs are carried out in a reasonable timescale.</p>                                                                                                                               | 3 December 2025 |
| <p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require.<br/>(Regulation 10 (1)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities and seek necessary medical advice for children.</p> | 3 December 2025 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | 3 December 2025 |

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| <p>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—</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate.<br/>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v)(b)(i)(ii))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |                        |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; and</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.<br/>(Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <p>3 December 2025</p> |
| <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>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</p> | <p>3 December 2025</p> |



intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").

The registered person must—  
supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 2807623

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** The Foundation Project Limited

**Registered provider address:** 15 Link Road, Rayleigh SS6 8AF

**Responsible individual:** Anthony McKenzie

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Syvanna Matthew, Social Care Inspector

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