

# 2583028

## **The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

### **Information about this children's home**

This children's home is operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide residential care for four children between the ages of five and 17. According to the home's statement of purpose, it provides care for children who have some form of deafness or communication difficulties as well as needs such as behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.

The registered manager post is vacant. The acting manager is applying for registration.

**Inspection date:** 24 and 25 March 2021

### **This monitoring visit**

This visit took place as the home had not been inspected since it was registered in April 2020. Concerns were also identified through independent visitor reports and safeguarding notifications which are sent to Ofsted.

This visit was completed using a blended approach. One inspector visited the home to view the premises and to meet a child. A second inspector used video and phone calls to speak with managers, children, parents and professionals, and documentation was scrutinised. Three children currently live at this home.

Children have experienced a great deal of change in the past 12 months. For example, the home has moved to a new location, the impact of COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions, and several changes in staffing. Six members of staff have left the home since September, and the registered manager has also left. Five new staff and an acting manager are now in post.

Children are safeguarded and well cared for. Nurturing is intrinsic to the care that staff provide to children. Multi-agency working and actions taken to help keep children safe are effective.

One child has been supported to develop their communication skills significantly since moving into the home. This has had a life-changing impact on the child and their family. Very positive feedback was given by the child's social worker about the progress the child has made.

Recording of safeguarding concerns requires improvement to ensure that actions taken are clear and identified learning is promoted. Senior leaders completed an audit which demonstrates they have identified some of these shortfalls prior to the visit.

Safety plans are not always thorough and do not provide clear guidance for staff about how to meet the individual needs of children. Records are not always child centred in narrative.

Staff do not have the necessary training to meet the needs of one child who has autistic spectrum disorder. Comprehensive care planning and a cohesive multi-agency approach has promoted positive outcomes for this child.

Not all new staff have behaviour management training before working with children. This means that they are not able to safely use physical intervention if required. Senior leaders and managers have scheduled this training in the next few weeks.

Two children are engaged in full-time education and have good attainment. One child does not have access to formal education. Senior leaders and managers are working closely with other professionals to source the right provision for this child.

A fourth child has moved on from the home due to natural progression. This was a positive and planned move. The child remains in contact with staff.

The home itself needs maintenance work to provide an environment which children are proud of. There are several locks on doors which means that staff need to carry keys. This detracts from a homely feel. Senior leaders and managers are planning to develop the home and to remove these locks.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
Not previously inspected		

## 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, 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their education potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard at paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority.</p> <p>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(vii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that all children of school age are engaged in formal education which is in line with their needs.</p>	22 April 2021
<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>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that safety plans for children provide clear guidance for staff to enable them to keep children safe.</p>	22 April 2021

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 in, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have the appropriate training to keep children safe when physical intervention is required.

Staff should also have the relevant training to meet the individual needs of each child, specifically autistic spectrum disorder and complex mental health.

Senior leaders and managers must ensure that action is taken to address any shortfalls within the collating of safeguarding information. Any identified learning must also be clarified and acted on in a timely way.

22 April 2021

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is as homely as possible. They should seek to maintain a domestic rather than "institutional" impression. ('The guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', April 2015, page 15, paragraph 3.9) In particular, internal door locks should be removed unless necessary for privacy.
- The registered person should actively encourage children to access their records. ('The guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards', April 2015, page 62, paragraph 14.6) In particular, records should provide a child-centred narrative.

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children’s home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** 2583028

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

**Registered provider:** The Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education

**Registered provider address:** Exeter Royal Academy for Deaf Education, 50 Topsham Road, Exeter, Devon EX2 4NF

**Responsible individual:** James Heaver

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## **Inspectors**

Polly Soper, Social Care Inspector

Paula Lahey, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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