

# 1278020

Registered provider: Blue Elephant Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by an independent organisation. It provides short- and medium-term care for up to three children.

Since the previous inspection, two children have moved out of the home. At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2018 and was present throughout the inspection.

### Inspection dates: 26 and 27 August 2025

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

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 27 May 2025

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** One compliance notice under regulation 12 following the last inspection, where the overall judgement was inadequate. This compliance notice was found to have been met at the monitoring visit on 16 July 2025.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 27/05/2025      | Full            | Inadequate           |
| 04/02/2025      | Full            | Good                 |
| 14/11/2023      | Full            | Good                 |
| 13/10/2022      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

One child is currently living in the home and the inspector spent some time with them. The inspector observed positive interactions between staff and the child.

Staff seek children's wishes and feelings regularly and the care provided is based around this and their individual needs. Children make progress in the home, both regarding education and emotional development. Staff have important conversations with children about their lived experiences and wishes and feelings. Children have positive daily experiences in the home. Staff focus on providing fun and engaging activities for the children such as day trips out to the safari park or the seaside.

Staff promote and support children's education. The child currently living in the home attends school full time. Staff understand the importance of continuity and stability for children to help them make progress at school.

One parent stated that the communication from the home is good, and that they are kept informed of any incidents and on the progress of their child. Family time is promoted and facilitated by staff and the manager on a regular basis. One social worker said that they are always able to get hold of the manager and feel well informed about the progress of the child.

When children move out of the home, it is managed in a planned way, with a timescale which works for the specific needs of the child.

Staff recording of children's daily experiences varies in quality and contains some institutional language. There have been significant improvements made to the home environment, which has resulted in it feeling more 'loved' and homely.

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

Staff understand the risks related to the children in the home and are provided with training to support this understanding. The manager understands the skills and experience of the staff team, including possible limitations, and is considering these alongside potential referrals for new children moving into the home.

The relationships between the staff team and the children are positive. Staff confidence in managing children's behaviour using therapeutic approaches has increased significantly and has been enhanced by training they have received. When incidents occur, staff manage these using consistent boundaries and a nurturing approach.

There has been a significant decrease in the use of physical interventions with children. Staff have received additional training in physical interventions, however staff are not always confident in using a physical intervention in emergency situations.

Staff have stopped using punitive or lengthy consequences. The manager is working towards using more reparative approaches to manage behaviour.

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

The manager confidently advocates on behalf of the children in the home and focuses on supporting them to achieve their future goals. The manager understands the children and their experiences prior to coming to the home and spends time with them.

When new staff are recruited into the home, full reference checks are not always completed, and there is a lack of persistence in seeking evidence of prospective workers' previous experiences. The gaps in these checks could impact on the safety of children.

Staff feel supported by the manager and the senior leadership team. Staff supervisions vary in quality and do not contain time specific goals. When there are concerns about staff, the manager is confident in addressing these. However, further plans to manage these concerns are not always accurately or robustly recorded. Management oversight is not always present on records, particularly regarding one-to-one conversations between staff and the children.

Staff have received training to enhance their practice and confidence in caring for the children in the home. This is evident in how they are managing and approaching incidents. The manager understands the home's strengths and weaknesses, and there are plans in place to address these areas for development.

The manager and staff have positive relationships and clear communication with external professionals. Children are encouraged to share their views and to participate in decision-making about their lives; and when they raise concerns, they are listened to.

## 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 registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>(The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.</p> <p>(32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that every possible step is taken to gain references for potential employees, particularly when these references relate to roles working with vulnerable children.</p> | 1 June 2025      |
| <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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(13) (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | 1 September 2025 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                 |  |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that they provide clear oversight on records related to children to ensure continuity of care and practice in the home.</p> |  |
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## Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that staff record information in a way which will be helpful to the child, and in a way which is clear, careful and objective and avoids institutionalised language. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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:** 1278020

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

**Registered provider:** Blue Elephant Childcare Limited

**Registered provider address:** Unit 30 Chivenor Business Park, Barnstaple EX31 4AY

**Responsible individual:** Emma Lyall

**Registered manager:** Deirdre Curran

## Inspector

Helen Cushnie, Social Care Inspector

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