

1280210

Registered provider: First Blue Healthcare Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for two children who have had adverse childhood experiences.

The current manager started in post in October 2022. The manager is experienced and is working towards securing an appropriate qualification and submitting her registration application.

Inspection date: 28 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 17 May 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be 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 did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Two children live in the home. One child has lived there for over one year, and the other child moved into the home in December 2022. Since the last inspection, one child has moved on to a different placement because the home was unable to meet their needs.

The manager and staff, in consultation with the children, have made some changes in the home, including new flooring and paint for the walls. The home is well furnished and decorated, with a warm and homely feel. Children's bedrooms are well decorated and furnished to meet their needs. Children told the inspector that there was nothing they would want to change about the home.

Staff work in partnership with the children's schools and virtual learning professionals to ensure that children access an education timetable tailored to their individual needs. One child, with the support of staff, was out of the home on the day of this inspection, exploring an apprenticeship opportunity in an area of work he has a significant interest in. Another child, who had not engaged with education for a significant period of time, has been supported to re-engage with education. Staff help this child to participate in online education with a tutor. This child now has aspirations to work in the childcare profession and has been encouraged by staff to complete free online training courses to receive certificates for their chosen career path. As a result of consistent support from staff, children are progressing well.

Staff understand the health needs of children well, and children are supported to attend medical appointments to promote their well-being. One child, who would not previously engage with therapeutic services, has been supported to progress a referral to the child and adolescent mental health service. Consequently, children have access to services that promote their emotional well-being.

The safety of children

The home has experienced a reduction of missing-from-care incidents. Children now rarely go missing from the home. On one occasion when this did happen, staff managed the incident well, followed the child's plans and used de-escalation techniques. This ensured that the child returned to the home safely.

Risk assessments are very detailed and thorough. They identify risks of harm and any known triggers and outline ways to respond to concerns to increase children's safety. Staff understand risks well and respond immediately to ensure that children are safe.

When staff complete behaviour management plans, they include children's views and support children to consider unsafe scenarios. This helps children to understand the ways in which they can keep themselves safe.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. Staff empathise with the children and seek to resolve incidents quickly. Since the last inspection, staff have not needed to use physical interventions, and there have not been any incidents that have resulted in staff calling the police.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has been off on long-term sick leave, and a registered manager from another home in the company provided leadership and management cover. The current interim manager has been in post since October 2022. The registered manager has recently submitted his notice to leave his role. As a result, the current interim manager has plans to progress her registration to provide continuity and consistency for children and staff.

The manager knows the children well and has a good understanding of their needs. The manager is reviewing practice and introducing changes to improve children's experiences. For example, a child moving into the home experienced a well-planned introduction that involved an initial visit to the home and one overnight stay. This allowed the child to make connections with the other child living in the home and staff before moving in. As a result, the child settled into the home well.

Training records show that staff complete a diverse range of appropriate training, both online and face to face, to develop their knowledge, skills and professional practice. New staff receive a comprehensive induction and move on to completing a Level 3 Diploma in Residential Childcare. This means that staff are well trained to meet the needs of children in their care.

Staff are complimentary of the manager and say they feel supported by the manager and team leaders to develop their practice. Staff recruitment is undertaken in line with the safer recruitment protocol, which means that all relevant checks needed for staff to work with children are undertaken.

The manager and team leader have addressed all requirements made at the last inspection. However, on one occasion, a child's transition from the home on to other placements was not clearly recorded. Therefore, the quality of the support provided for this transition could not be determined.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/05/2021	Full	Good
09/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, 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 registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, children's transitions from the home must be recorded so there is a record of these events.	12 May 2023

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1280210

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: First Blue Healthcare Limited

Registered provider address: Seighford Hall, Clanford Road, Seighford, Stafford
ST18 9NL

Responsible individual: Martin Hodgson

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Sharon Bourne, Social Care Inspector

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