

2500044

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care for up to two children with social and emotional needs. The home is led by an experienced registered manager.

There is currently one child living at the home.

Inspection dates: 29 February and 1 March 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 9 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
08/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
17/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/04/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The home is spacious and kept to a lovely standard. The child has recently been supported to move to a larger bedroom and is decorating this to their taste. Staff take pride in home maintenance. They continually look at how the home can be further improved so that all spaces feel like cosy and welcoming spaces.

The child living at the home is making excellent progress. They have settled well following several moves and have developed warm and trusting relationships with staff. Clear and consistent boundaries have seen a reduction in challenging behaviours and the child is better able to regulate their emotions and stay calm. The child feels confident to express their thoughts and feelings, knowing that staff will listen and offer support.

The child is making impressive progress at school. They have recently been supported to transition to secondary school which they have adapted well to. Their educational attainment is supported by additional tutoring sessions which the child values. Staff understand the importance of nurturing the child's friendships from school, they regularly welcome the child's friends into the home, recognising the sense of belonging this offers the child.

Children are well supported when they move into and leave the home. One child has recently returned to live with their family successfully. Staff work proactively to effectively plan, alongside the child's parent, to help the child to settle back into the family home. Staff stay in touch with children when they move on, ensuring they know that they are still cared for and held in mind.

The child is valued and listened to by staff. The child is engaged regularly in one to one discussions and children's meetings occur weekly. These have a format that the child can rely on and that allows them to influence the care they receive. The manager responds to issues raised by the child quickly and thoroughly. This allows the child to know that their opinions matter and supports them to understand how their concerns or suggestions will be resolved.

Recordings in the home are of a high quality but could benefit from being more consistently nurturing in tone. Staff understand the needs of the child well but should be mindful that known information about the child is recorded clearly in care plans.

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

There have been very few serious incidents within the home during the inspection period. Where incidents have occurred, children are supported through one to one discussion to understand the concerns and to ensure that they know how to keep themselves safe.

The risks to the child are fully understood by the staff and are documented clearly in risk assessments. These support staff to understand a child's presentation both when calm and when they are engaged in behaviour that puts them at risk. Plans offer staff pragmatic and personalised approaches to support children and ensure they are kept safe. Staff are not risk averse, they recognise that children sometimes need space to regulate and have created spaces where they can do this safely. A separate sensory space within the home has been created to support this. For one child staff agreed upon a location outside of the home where they could walk to alone, whilst still within sight of staff. This proactively reduced their need to go missing.

Physical interventions have occurred, but these are reducing. Where these have occurred staff proactively de-escalate the situation and holds are used as a last resort. Staff debrief and keyworks with children are completed quickly and encourage reflection and learning. The child can now identify their feelings and what has caused them to become upset. Staff work with children in a therapeutic way and recordings are empathetic of the child's experiences and the wider context of incidents.

Staff use sanctions to address difficult behaviour but utilise positive language so that children understand these as natural consequences of their actions. Consequences are used meaningfully, and their effectiveness is evaluated by the manager. Where a consequence is implemented, staff work with the child to help them to understand why it has been put in place. An example is that recently a child had their phone removed where there were concerns that they were not using the internet safely. Staff used this time to work with the child on how to keep themselves safe online.

The home has not received any complaints in the inspection period but has had many compliments particularly from children who have lived at the home. Children enjoy expressing their gratitude to staff in notes and pictures. These evidence that children feel protected, know they are cared for and value the relationships with staff. One child's letter seen states 'thanks for supporting me the whole way through and always being by my side, you have helped me everyday'.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Staff have an inspirational and committed manager who is ambitious for the child, staff, and the home. The manager works in an innovative way to continually adapt practice to better meet the needs of the child. The manager has developed a culture of nurture within the home and the child is encouraged to meet their potential.

Staff like working at the home and feel well supported by the manager. They receive regular, good quality supervision that values their wellbeing and encourages reflection on how they care for the child. Staff attend team meetings regularly and ensure that comprehensive minutes are produced. This ensures consistency of approach by staff who are not in attendance. Consequently, staff want to progress in the company and the manager quickly plans for how this can be achieved. Retention of staff is good, and this offers consistency and stability to the child.

The manager is present and available to the child, as a result they feel that they can go to her if they are feeling worried or upset. The manager is proactive to ensure that the child feels valued and cared for. Staff are encouraged to capture memories in photo albums and to write letters to children. The child's success is celebrated, this is building their sense of identity and self-esteem.

The manager understands the importance of thorough and insightful quality assurance systems. She can evidence the impact of the care on the progress that the child is making. The manager ensures she has oversight of incidents and recordings and offers comments that inform staff's learning. Where more specialised training is required to support children, the manager ensures this is available for staff. Staff are engaged quickly in the required qualification. This ensures that the child is cared for by staff that understand how to keep them safe whilst promoting their independence and development.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping, and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,'page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2500044

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 20-21, Pullman Business Court, Mallard Way, Pride Park, Derby DE24 8GX

Responsible individual: Pradeep Manaktala

Registered manager: Marianne Marlow

Inspector

Louise Copping, social care inspector

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