

2502333

Registered provider: Brighter Futures for Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority and provides short breaks for up to six children at any one time. The home provides care to children with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

The home currently provides short breaks to 40 children. During this inspection, there were two children accessing the service for solo visits across the two days.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since May 2022.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2023	Full	Good
25/10/2022	Full	Outstanding
20/07/2021	Full	Outstanding
12/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are happy and content when they visit the home because staff have developed positive relationships with them and their families. Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and are responsive to any changes in behaviour. They have respectful interactions with children and support them to make choices using their preferred method of communication. For example, staff were observed to communicate with children about meals and activities.

Staff support children to have pleasant experiences when they stay at the home. The registered manager has a thoughtful approach to organising children's visits. She is mindful of their friendship groups, their positive attributes and level of independence. Children have the opportunity to participate in lots of activities inside the home, such as playing with toys, arts and crafts and using the sensory room. Staff also take children on trips, for example visiting public gardens or going to restaurants.

Children are supported to make good progress. For instance, staff noticed one child was becoming withdrawn. The registered manager invited the child's mother to the home to talk about her child's changing needs and behaviours. Staff supported the child to rebuild their social skills, which meant they could have visits with a peer and spend time in the community. They also supported the child to develop independence skills.

Managers and staff have established strong working relationships with parents and external professionals, who speak positively about the care children receive. School staff praised staff for their proactive approach, which includes visiting children at school and sharing ideas with teachers. Staff also attend social care meetings where they contribute to plans that support the children's well-being and safety.

The organisation recently received funding, and this enabled leaders to refurbish the home and renovate the garden. There has been a positive transformation, and it is clear that decisions have been child-centred. Children were consulted about redecoration, which creates a sense of belonging. For example, they were given several options about a large feature wall and decided that they wanted the artist to paint a sunrise.

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

Due to good multi-agency working, staff are well informed about children's lived experiences, vulnerabilities and the risks around them. Sometimes, parents are reluctant to accept the package of care offered by the local authority. The registered manager seeks to reassure them by extending invitations for 'tea visits' to parents, which means they can attend with their children.

The registered manager arranges additional support for families that experience crisis, for example increasing the support package for children, which means they can spend more time at the home. She has also participated in home visits with social workers and contributed to placement planning meetings. The care offered to children is adaptable based on their individual circumstances and needs.

Staff respond positively to children's behaviours, which means there is minimal use of restraint. Managers have thoughtfully considered how they capture non-verbal children's views and feelings after incidents of restraint. They have a toolkit in place, which includes communication aids and which prompts staff to observe children's behaviours. Despite this, staff are not consistently seeking and recording children's views after incidents.

Managers complete safer recruitment checks when they employ new staff and when they use agency staff. They try to minimise any safer recruitment risks by using the same agency staff. There have been no safeguarding concerns involving permanent or agency staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to supporting children and is keen to involve their families in the service. She does this by organising tea visits, coffee mornings and seasonal parties. This means that children, their parents and siblings have the opportunity to spend time together in the home.

Children benefit from a consistent staff team that offers them predictability. Managers are actively recruiting for vacant posts. However, success has been limited. In the meantime, they use regular bank staff and agency workers. The home has been closed on one occasion due to staff shortages. In most instances, managers work alongside staff to avoid closure, prioritising the children.

The registered manager has a good understanding of staff's training and development needs. Since the last inspection, managers have made significant improvements to their recording and filing system, which means they understand when staff need refresher training and which prompts them to complete this.

Staff benefit from regular supervision. They attend additional training and team-building events organised through the local authority. This shift to include the home in the wider children's services network has boosted staff morale as they feel recognised and valued.

The registered manager is an ambitious individual who is keen to strengthen services for disabled children. She is spearheading a practice-development group for like-minded professionals and services in the borough.

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
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— help each child to express views, wishes and feelings. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that children are supported to express their views after incidents of restraint.	31 August 2024

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: 2502333

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brighter Futures for Children Limited

Registered provider address: Reading Borough Council Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 2LU

Responsible individual: Wasiq Sumbal

Registered manager: Samantha Whitehouse

Inspector

Tara Webb, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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