

2591708

Registered provider: First Blue Healthcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation and is registered to provide care for up to three children who may be experiencing social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home and spoke with the inspectors.

The registered manager post has been vacant since November 2024. A new manager started work in December 2024 and has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 May 2025

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 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/11/2023	Full	Good
16/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
21/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, the same child has remained living in the home. The home is welcoming and well presented. Communal areas offer the child large, comfortable spaces in which to relax and enjoy themselves. The child's bedroom is highly personalised, with photos of people who are important to them and pictures of their favourite football players.

The child enjoys positive relationships with staff, which contributes to their enjoyment of the home, with them scoring it nine out of 10. Staff work hard to build these relationships. They have important conversations with the child to help them be safer and healthier, and to promote their education and independence. As a result, the child is making good progress from their starting points. They are better able to express their feelings in positive ways, incidents of them going missing have reduced and their engagement with education has improved.

The child's education is a priority. Leaders and managers have strongly advocated for the child, to overcome barriers to education. When the child's school sought to suspend them, the manager challenged this effectively, working in partnership with the school to identify an alternative approach which better supported the child's learning. As a result, the child's attendance and engagement in school have improved dramatically. They recently completed their first term without any unauthorised absences. The child said that they love school. Such improvements in engagement and attendance are enhancing the child's life experiences.

The child enjoys a range of activities of their choosing. They have sleepovers with friends, go on walks, play pool, volunteer with animals and engage in fundraising for charity. Recently, the child and staff baked cakes and hosted a coffee morning, raising over £200 for a charity supporting people who have cancer and their families. These experiences support the child to develop new skills, make friends and build positive memories.

The child receives individualised care and they have a range of ways to shape the care they receive. Staff actively seek the child's views and, where appropriate and possible, act on them. As a result, the child feels listened to, and said that staff in the home help them. However, there has been a delay in achieving actions set out in the child's plans. The responsibility for this delay does not sit with the manager or staff, however, it was not clear that the manager challenged the local authority or partner agencies to prevent drift and delay for the child. The outstanding actions are now set to be addressed. However, the child has experienced delay in being supported with a medical condition and in receiving support to help them understand their life experiences.

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

The child feels safe. Safeguarding incidents are rare because staff have good relationships with the child and the child enjoys living in the home. Since the last inspection, there have not been any incidents of staff having to physically intervene to keep the child or others safe, and incidents of the child going missing are reducing. When the child goes missing, staff follow their plans and work effectively with partner agencies to ensure that the child is returned home safely.

The child's achievements and positive behaviour are celebrated and encouraged, using frequent rewards. Consequences are used as a last resort and are proportionate to the behaviours they seek to discourage. The manager has good oversight of the use of consequences, and the child is given the opportunity to reflect and comment on their use, as well as opportunities to repair relationships. This supports the child's learning, while also helping them to feel safe and listened to.

The manager informs the regulator of most reportable incidents. On one occasion, they failed to notify the regulator of a serious incident. Appropriate action was taken to ensure the child's safety and to address the issues leading to this incident. However, the lack of notification reduces the regulator's ability to have effective oversight.

At times, staff have not shown appropriate professional curiosity in relation to the child expressing concerns about their friends engaging in risky or harmful behaviours. Staff have missed opportunities to safeguard children outside of the home, and to reduce the emotional burden for the child, who feels responsible for keeping their friends safe.

Online safety is a focus in the home. While leaders and managers strive to implement strategies to promote online safety, there has not always been agreement between the home's leaders and managers and the child's placing local authority on how best to achieve this. When there has not been agreement and the manager has continued to have concerns about the online safety of the child, it is not always clear that they have escalated their concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have high aspirations for children in their care and the staff they are responsible for. As a result, the child and staff speak positively about the leaders and managers and feel supported by them.

Leaders and managers have a range of tools they use to oversee all aspects of the child's care in the home. As a result, they have a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and are developing a learning culture within the home.

Leaders and managers are skilled at building positive working relationships with partner agencies and the child's family. This promotes partnership working designed to ensure the child gets the correct support. External professionals and family members speak

positively about the home. They identify communication as a key strength, and did not identify any areas for improvement.

Leaders and managers ensure that staff have regular supervisions, team meetings and good-quality training. They make good use of the home's therapist to develop staff practice. As a result, staff feel well supported and the child is cared for by staff who are knowledgeable and motivated.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that staff demonstrate professional curiosity and take appropriate action when a child raises concerns about other children outside of the home.	30 August 2025
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—	30 August 2025

seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans;

seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;

if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and

seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.

(Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c)(d))

In particular, this relates to the manager appropriately challenging the placing authority or partner agencies to prevent delay in a child receiving support, or when they feel plans do not appropriately safeguard children.

Recommendation

- The registered person should notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: 2591708

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: Samantha Orr

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

John Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector

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