

2600978

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is privately owned. It provides care for up to four children who have social and emotional difficulties due to past trauma.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2024. He has recently completed a relevant level 5 qualification for residential childcare.

The inspector observed and spoke with all three children who were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 August 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 November 2024

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
19/11/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/08/2023	Full	Good
27/07/2022	Full	Good
20/04/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from a stable home that provides them with consistency and a sense of security. The same three children have continued to live in the home since the last inspection. One child has lived there for almost a year, another for 16 months, and the third for 20 months. These long-term placements have contributed positively to children's emotional well-being and progress.

Children say they like living in the home and that they have trusted staff whom they like and can confide in. Children say that the staff are 'friendly' and that they keep them safe. Feedback from children's social workers is also positive. They say that children are making good progress from their starting points. One social worker said that staff are good at building relationships and understanding their child's thoughts and feelings. Another social worker said that staff have good insight into their child's challenges and how to support the child.

Staff support children's hobbies and interests and establish strong bonds with children by engaging in shared activities. For example, one child goes fishing and attends gym sessions with staff. Children also benefit from beach outings and trips to theme parks, which they enjoy both with other children and staff.

Managers understand the barriers that children face in attending education. They advocate effectively for children to engage in learning in ways that are tailored to their individual needs. For example, one child with a history of disrupted education now attends school every day. Another child benefits from a bespoke education package, and staff have successfully supported them to complete entry-level qualifications. This personalised approach helps children to feel reassured and valued and contributes to improved self-esteem and confidence in their abilities.

Staff support children to keep in touch with people who are important to them. Parents and social workers say that staff support has strengthened family relationships. One parent observed that their child is noticeably more relaxed since living in the home, praising staff for their calm and reassuring approach.

The home is spacious and offers communal areas where children and staff can spend time together. However, the cleanliness of the environment and some children's bedrooms requires attention. This detracts from the overall quality of the living environment and may impact children's sense of well-being.

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

Children develop strong, trusting relationships with staff, which form the foundation for their progress and emotional security. Staff know the children well and respond to their individual needs. Following incidents, staff engage children in meaningful conversations

that help children to reflect on their behaviour and build emotional resilience. This restorative approach supports children to better understand their feelings and develop more positive coping strategies. Children who arrive at the home with high levels of physical and verbal aggression show a marked reduction in risk over time.

Managers and staff work collaboratively with children's social workers to support children in taking age-appropriate risks. They enable children to spend free time with friends and ensure that this is done safely and in line with individual risk assessments. Staff talk to children about risk, trust and personal responsibility. This helps children to understand the boundaries in place and what they need to demonstrate to earn increased independence. As a result, one child who previously had limited free time due to behaviours during time spent with friends that involved risk is now able to enjoy time with their friends in a safe and supported way.

When there are concerns about staff practice, managers carry out thorough investigations and take appropriate action to keep children safe. When staff practice falls below expected standards, managers have honest conversations. They reflect with staff both individually and in team meetings. They then give staff clear guidance for improvement. This fosters a learning environment in which staff understand their safeguarding duties and the importance of vigilance and consistency.

Leaders act promptly when a child raises an allegation or concern. They undertake thorough, effective investigations and ensure the child is informed of the outcome. This transparent approach reassures children that their voice matters and that they are both valued and heard.

Managers ensure that age-appropriate controls are in place to help children use the internet safely. These measures support children to explore online spaces while minimising risk. In addition, staff engage children in regular conversations about online safety. These discussions help children to understand potential risks and make informed choices. This proactive approach supports children to develop the skills they need to stay safe online.

Systems for the administration of medication are safe and effective. Staff follow clear procedures, and records are maintained to ensure that children's health needs are met.

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

The manager is committed to placing children at the centre of the home's practice. He demonstrates a caring and child-focused approach and is working to embed a consistent ethos across the staff team. Strategic managers are a visible presence in the home and provide support to the manager in his practice. Leadership arrangements are developing, but further work is needed to strengthen the effectiveness of managerial oversight.

Managers' monitoring is not yet effective in driving continuous improvement in the quality of care. For example, an independent visitor regularly visits the home and provides good-quality reports that include clear actions to support improvement. However, managers do not consistently act on these recommendations. Additionally, managers do not always demonstrate professional curiosity when there are shortfalls in staff recording of incidents. Additionally, managers' oversight of guidance to staff regarding children's risks is inconsistent. This lack of effective monitoring undermines development of a culture of continuous improvement.

Staff say that managers are supportive and that strategic managers regularly visit the home. However, staff do not receive regular supervision or an annual appraisal. This limits opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice, receive feedback and plan their professional development. The manager acknowledges the shortfall and has implemented a plan to address it.

Staff benefit from a structured induction programme that includes face-to-face training in key areas such as safeguarding, first aid and behaviour management. However, cover staff do not always receive an effective induction when they work in the home. On one occasion, this lack of preparation led to confusion about a child's routines which impacted on the child's behaviours.

Managers have been slow to implement face-to-face training in the organisation's model of care. For example, some staff who have worked at the home for over a year have not received this training. In addition, staff have not yet received specialist training to meet the specific needs of children, such as those with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder. Although staff have a good understanding of children's specific needs, this lack of training could limit their ability to provide consistently individualised support.

A consistent core team of four staff, alongside the registered manager, have remained in post throughout the duration of each child's placement. In addition, two further staff members have worked at the home for over a year. The home is fully staffed to meet the needs of the children, and the use of cover staff from other homes is rare. As a result, children are cared for by adults who know them well and understand their individual needs and preferences.

The home's statement of purpose does not contain all the required information. It lacks details about the experience of all staff members. This omission limits the ability of local authority commissioners and the regulator to fully understand the skills and expertise of the staff team. As a result, it reduces transparency and may hinder effective oversight and decision-making.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that staff receive training as described in the home's statement of purpose, as well as training to meet each child's individual needs. Also, that managers are professionally curious when considering incidents and that they consistently update guidance to staff and that this guidance is readily accessible. Additionally, that managers promptly address actions identified by the independent visitor and consistent shortfalls in managers' and staff practice.	21 September 2025

The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home’s statement of purpose; ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child’s needs, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans, taking account of the child’s background; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iv)(vii)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that staff support children to tidy and clean and their bedrooms and that high standards of hygiene are maintained in all bathrooms throughout the home. Additionally, that children have sufficient storage in their bedrooms for their personal items and that children are fully supported to personalise their bedrooms.	21 September 2025
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal. Managers should	21 September 2025

also ensure that they plan for staff to receive support that will enable them to develop their professional practice.	
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the following elements of the workforce plan are included in the statement of purpose: the staffing structure, the experience and qualifications of staff, and arrangements for supervision of staff practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: 2600978

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 21 Mallard Way, Pride Park, Derby DE24 8GX

Responsible individual: Pradeep Manaktala

Registered manager: Lee Coley

Inspector

Karen Gillingwater, Social Care Inspector

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