

2619357

Registered provider: Blue Elephant Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local private organisation that operates several other homes in the area. It provides care for up to four children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. Two of the children were seen and spoken to by the inspector. One child has moved out, and one child has moved in since the last inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2023.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 February 2026

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: 4 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2025	Full	Good
02/05/2023	Full	Good
22/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/03/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The inspector spent time with two of the children living in the home, who shared their views on what it is like to live there. One child said their home is '10 out of 10', and another expressed how they feel they have settled in quickly. A third child living in the home did not wish to speak to the inspector.

Care provided to the children in the home is consistently centred on their individual needs, wishes and feelings. The manager places a strong emphasis on helping children understand their histories through accessing life-story work, which is closely supported and overseen by her and the team. As a result, all children have made clear progress since moving into the home.

Professionals working with the home note that they receive good communication from staff and the manager and feel that the children have made progress since living there. One parent noted that the staff communicate well with them and feel that their child is happy living there. One extended family member expressed that although they were very upset when the child moved into the home, they now do not want them to leave because of how much progress the child has made since living there.

Children are well supported in relation to their education. The manager is proactive in advocating on their behalf, ensuring that educational provisions are appropriate and responsive to each child's needs. She also works closely with schools to help staff understand the children's needs and how best to support them. In the home, there is a strong focus on promoting children's emotional wellbeing and mental health. This is achieved through regular one-to-one sessions with staff, along with the manager's consistent advocacy to ensure that children have access to meaningful life-story work.

Children's wishes and feelings are consistently listened to and taken into account. This is reflected in key documents, in discussions with staff and in feedback from involved professionals.

The quality of recording and documentation in general is inconsistent. While some records are detailed and written directly to the child, others, such as some daily logs, are minimal and lack key information. Management oversight is also variable. For example, some documents show evidence of review, while others do not, making it unclear when or how concerns about recording quality are being addressed. This impacts on the managers understanding of consistency and quality of care provided by staff.

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

Overall, the children in the home are settled. Staff identify the main risks to children as social media and internet use. Staff generally demonstrate a good understanding of these risks and how to manage them appropriately. Risk assessments are in place in

relation to staff oversight of children's use of technology and internet access. Staff routinely record when technology checks have been completed, and these have generally identified only low-level concerns. However, it is not always clear how or where this information is subsequently shared or monitored by the manager.

One child's complex health needs are met effectively. Staff show confidence and competence in understanding and supporting the child's specific needs.

When children move into the home, appropriate assessments are completed to identify any competing needs or potential risks, along with clear strategies to mitigate these. The child who moved on from the home last year received a high level of support and consistent advocacy from the manager throughout their transition.

Risks relating to the children living together in the home are clearly documented and actions for staff are clear. Information about potential risks for one child has not always been clearly recorded or triangulated, limiting the ability to fully evaluate the cumulative impact. Staff have not always used professional curiosity to further explore these concerns, and these concerns have not always been highlighted to the manager.

Children have experienced mostly consistent boundaries in the home. However, there have been periods where some inconsistencies have occurred. The manager has recognised that there was an overuse of consequences, and this has since been addressed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager of the home is clear about her ambitions for the children and supports staff effectively to promote their progress. She knows the children extremely well and has been closely involved in therapeutic work that helps them understand their life stories. The manager has an expectation of all staff to provide a good standard of care for the children.

The manager has a clear understanding of each child's life history and the ways in which these experiences have influenced the child's overall wellbeing. In situations where external agency responses have been poor or delayed, the manager has provided strong and persistent advocacy on behalf of the children, continuing to challenge and pursue support despite ongoing lack of engagement.

The manager is able to identify the home's strengths and areas for development, and she is able to articulate how these directly influence the progress and experiences of the children. Actions arising from team meetings are well documented and contribute to the ongoing development of the staff team. These actions are also followed through and reinforced within staff supervisions, ensuring consistency and accountability.

Staff and the manager maintain the home environment to ensure it is a homely, welcoming and personalised space for the children. Each bedroom is decorated and furnished in a manner that supports each of the children's likes and interests.

Staff feel well supported by the manager, who they describe as caring and committed to the children's welfare as well as their own. Although there have been periods of reduced team morale, these issues are being managed and improved successfully.

The manager has oversight of the general care the children receive in the home, but this is not consistent throughout all documents and records. The manager is clear that this is an area of development and has been impacted by the loss of senior members of the team. The manager has raised this with senior managers and is clear that while this is not currently impacting on the care of the children, this is not sustainable in the long term.

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— 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that there is consistent manager record-keeping and management oversight to understand and evaluate care. This requirement has been reinstated from the last inspection.	1 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear record-keeping. Staff should record information on individual children in a consistent manner, and 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)
- The registered person should ensure staff have the skills and knowledge to confidently identify signs that children may be at risk and use professional curiosity to further explore these. Potential concerns should always be shared with, and further

explored by, the registered person to identify any escalating concerns. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

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: 2619357

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blue Elephant Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 30, Chivenor Business Park, Barnstaple, Devon
EX31 4AY

Responsible individual: Emma Lyall

Registered manager: Victoria Cann

Inspector

Helen Cushnie, Social Care Inspector

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