

2728327

Registered provider: Gracebridge Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to 4 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, 2 children were living at the home. All children shared their views with the inspector.

There is no registered manager in post. An interim manager has been in post since 7 April 2026. They have not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 April 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: 29 September 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/09/2025	Full	Good
03/12/2024	Full	Good
05/02/2024	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children are making good progress in various aspects of their lives. They say they have positive relationships with staff and feel safe. Staff have a thorough understanding of children's needs and risks and have the necessary skills and experience to support them. Staff feel supported by the management team and are positive about their working environment.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home, and one child has moved in. Children's moves into and out of the home are managed effectively, even when they are unplanned. One child said, 'They made me feel really welcome. I didn't know what to expect when I came here, and it's been really good.' Staff are sensitive and caring in their approach. This helps support children during times of uncertainty.

The children said they like living in the home and that they feel safe. One child rated the home '11 out of 10', and another rated it as 'a million out of 10'. Family members and professionals speak highly of the staff and the care provided. A parent said, '[Name of child] is a lot calmer; he is in tune with his emotions and is bubblier. The home has had a massive improvement on [name of child].'

Children's health needs are well understood and met. Staff support them in attending routine health appointments. Specialist referrals are also made at the right time. Staff use the trusting relationships they have built with children to help them identify ways to manage sensitive health issues. As a result, children experience improved health outcomes.

Children are progressing well with education. One child continues to attend school full time. One child is waiting to start school and has a tutor. The tutor said that the child is ready to learn, engages well and has made a lot of progress from their starting point. The staff have no structured education plan in place. This is a missed opportunity to help prepare the child for the transition back to school.

Children are encouraged to participate in a range of activities of their choice, such as trampolining, basketball and go-karting. Their views about activities are routinely explored and acted on. Children are encouraged to try new experiences. One child attended a local youth club. This helps children develop peer relationships outside of the home and enhance their experiences and social skills.

Children have spent increased time with people who are important to them, which staff have advocated for at children's request. Leaders arranged a meeting, and a plan was put in place for increased time. One child has been able to celebrate more family

occasions, which they would have missed. This has created an increased sense of belonging.

The home has ample space and is well decorated in areas. There are several places for children to play, such as a large garden and a games room. Children have been involved in the redesign of some rooms, including their bedrooms. There is some damage in the home, including damage to furniture. It is important that any damage is resolved in a timely manner, ensuring that the home is a safe and pleasant environment for children. Steps are being taken to address these issues.

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

Children feel safe living in the home, and safeguarding incidents are rare. The staff have a thorough understanding of the children's risks and needs. Children's plans are regularly updated and reviewed. This helps children receive consistent care.

Staff regularly speak to children about important topics. These conversations aim to help children be safer and to understand areas they need to develop. Children can see the progress they are making. One child said, 'Staff have really helped me with my emotions. They seem to have been able to figure out my emotions. I don't get as angry anymore.' This is helping children develop life skills they will need throughout their childhood and into adulthood.

Physical intervention is used only when necessary to protect children or others from immediate harm. The use of physical intervention is reducing because staff better understand children's behaviours. There is no record of a child having a reflective discussion on one occasion. This undermines an important safeguard and limits opportunities for children to reflect and for managers to improve practice.

Children know how to raise complaints. Any allegations they make are referred to the appropriate professionals. Investigations into allegations are thorough, and action is taken to ensure that children are cared for by adults who are safe and suitable. The outcomes of the investigations are shared and discussed with the children involved. This helps ensure that children feel heard.

All children have alarms on their bedroom doors. They are used as a default approach rather than to keep children safe. Such measures are an intrusive form of monitoring, and clear reasons need to be given to show they are proportionate for the needs of the children and regularly reviewed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There have been recent changes in the management team. The registered manager left the home in April 2026. The deputy manager is now acting as the interim manager, and a senior member of staff is now the deputy manager. To provide stability and meet regulatory requirements, the interim manager will need to register with Ofsted.

Children were prepared well for these changes. The previous manager had discussions with the children before they left. A goodbye meal was also arranged. Children have identified the members of the management team as people they would speak to if they had any concerns. These trusting relationships help children feel settled and adapt well to the changes.

Leaders are child focused and advocate for the children in their care as a good parent would. They have effective systems in place to monitor the quality of care children receive. They understand the home's strengths and areas for development and use their oversight to improve children's experiences.

The responsible individual has increased their support and has good oversight of the home. The responsible individual identified that the independent visitor reports lacked sufficient information for effective monitoring. In response, a new independent visitor has been appointed to strengthen external oversight.

There is a stable team of staff, who say they feel supported. One member of staff said, 'The home feels like a family home.' Another member of staff said, 'The support from management has made me more confident in my role.'

Staff have all completed their mandatory training. Specialist training also helps staff meet children's individual needs. Team meetings are also used to discuss the children. This strengthens practice and ensures that children's needs are understood and responded to effectively.

Social workers and family members are pleased with the progress children make. They are of the opinion that communication could be better. Weekly progress updates are not regularly provided. Failing to share information could delay children's access to services and hinder their progress.

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 registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that door alarms are used only when required to keep children safe from known risks. Door alarms should not be used as a default approach, and their use should be reviewed regularly to ensure their appropriateness.	9 June 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. In particular, any broken items should be disposed of, and any items that are worn should be replaced. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that all children and staff involved in a physical intervention are spoken to within the specified time frame. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that children who are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason are supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and engage in suitable structured activities. In particular, a well-structured plan of educational activities should be in place. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that they 'seek to involve' the placing authority and statutory social worker and those with parental responsibility for children, usually their parents or other carers. In particular, staff should ensure that social workers and parents receive weekly updates and take steps to help ensure that they can

communicate by telephone. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 2.5)

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: 2728327

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gracebridge Care

Registered provider address: Arden Lodge, 946 Warwick Road, Acocks Green,
Birmingham B27 6QG

Responsible individual: Richard Perry

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Emma Hutton, Social Care Inspector

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