

2743155

Registered provider: Blossom Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to provide care for up to six children with learning disabilities. The home is led by an experienced and suitably qualified manager.

At the time of this inspection, four children were living in the home. All the children were spoken with.

The home registered with Ofsted in April 2024. This is the home's first inspection.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 August 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	requires improvement to be 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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are warmly welcomed into the home, which helps them to settle. Children's moves into the home are well coordinated and are centred around them. The needs of children already living in the home are considered, which supports decision-making about whether a child should move into the home.

Over a short period of time, the staff have built relationships with children and their families. Children regularly seek interaction with staff and smile when they see them. Children and staff enjoy spending time together, for example, reading books and playing games. This is helping children to build trust and relationships.

The home is spacious, welcoming and well maintained. Facilities include a sensory room and play equipment for children to enjoy. Two children have their own self-contained living areas. These provide a calm and quiet environment which meets the children's sensory needs. Plans are in place to further improve the rear garden and personalise some communal areas with photos of the children, to further promote a sense of belonging.

Positive behaviour is encouraged through rewards and praise. Staff use consistent boundaries and, as a result, children's daily routines are improving. For example, the amount of time that children spend using their electronic gadgets and watching television is reducing. A social worker said of one child, 'A good bedtime and morning routine is in place. He is benefiting from this structure.'

Staff understand children's methods of communication and consultation with children is strong. Staff are skilled and ensure that the feelings and wishes of children who are non-verbal are gathered. As a result, children recently went horse-riding.

Staff make sure that children have fun and enjoy a range of activities, both in and out of the home. Children have recently enjoyed trips to the zoo and splash parks and to the beach. Because of this, children's social skills and self-esteem are increasing.

Staff understand children's health needs and they promote a healthy lifestyle, for example, eating nutritious foods. As a result, one child has gained some weight and the number of prescribed nutritional drinks that they consume has reduced. The child's parent is pleased about this.

Staff support children to spend time with their families. This ensures that children continue to build relationships and attachments with people who are significant to them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Managers do not always take effective action to keep children safe. On two occasions, a child did not receive their medicine to manage their health condition. Medical assistance ensured the safety of the child. However, ineffective medication procedures put the child at risk of harm. Lessons have been learned from the incidents. Staff have been further upskilled and processes have been improved. The child's social worker said, 'I am confident it won't happen again.'

Staff know how to keep the children safe, for example, when travelling in vehicles. Staff are attentive and they supervise children in line with their assessed needs. The staff team has remained stable since the home was registered. This provides consistency for children and supports their feeling of security because they know the staff looking after them.

On occasions, when expressing their feelings, one child causes themselves harm. Risk management plans have been created with the support of health professionals. The plans set out the actions staff must take to manage and reduce the risk. Staff use pictures and symbols to talk to the child about their behaviour, to keep them safe. The nurturing and caring approach shown by staff contributes to the progress the child is making. The child's parent said, 'Staff are doing all they can to keep him safe.'

Staff are trained in using de-escalation techniques and physical intervention is used only as a last resort. There is management oversight of all incidents. Learning is shared and used to improve practice, however, some records are not clear and have not been completed in line with the manager's expectations.

Recruitment practice is safe and managers ensure that children receive care from suitable adults. However, on one occasion, identification checks for a potential new staff member were not robust. A manager's professional curiosity and prompt action ensured that children's safety was not compromised.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is proud of the children and speaks about them with warmth and enthusiasm. He feels supported by the responsible individual, who visits the home regularly.

The manager is reflective, honest and takes full responsibility for the shortfalls that have compromised children's safety. He is aware of the strengths of the home and has further development plans to benefit children and support their progress. There are no plans to admit any further children into the home at this time.

Staff feel supported. All staff are in their probation periods and have completed a comprehensive induction. Staff complete a training programme to give them the skills to

support children well. This includes training to meet children's specific needs, for example, autism and epilepsy.

The manager values and appreciates his newly formed staff team. This positive approach means morale is high and staff are committed to wanting the best outcomes for children.

Practice-based supervision is reflective. However, one staff member has not received supervision in line with the specified frequency. This is a missed opportunity to support their development and well-being.

Managers have developed strong working relationships with external professionals, who speak positively about children's care and progress. This ensures effective communication. A social worker said, 'Communication is 100%.'

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	Date due
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children receive their medicines as prescribed.	5 September 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 2743155

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blossom Children's Homes Limited

Registered provider address: County Private Client, Unit 7-8, Moran House, 449-451 High Road, London NW10 2JJ

Responsible individual: Matthew Wakeling

Registered manager: Jack Woods

Inspector

Amy Richards, Social Care Inspector

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