

2748977

Registered provider: Blue Elephant Childcare Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and support for up to three children with emotional and social difficulties. It is part of a local organisation that owns several homes.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted on 11 October 2023.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 October 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 24 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/04/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Two children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spent time with both children. One child commented positively about living in the home. The other child said that they were not happy and that they have requested a move to a fostering placement in the hope that this would mean fewer restrictions around laptop use, for example. This child spoke positively about the relationships they have developed with staff within the home.

Children in this home do not receive a clear or cohesive approach from staff who look after them. Staff are using different approaches to support children, which means that the care being provided varies considerably. Care plans do not provide clear guidance to staff around how children should be supported, and plans are not routinely informed by other agencies, meaning that decision-making is taking place in isolation.

Some children have moves into the home that are not well planned. External agencies are not routinely consulted, which means that not all information is known about children's needs and risks prior to them moving in. The training and skill base of the team, and the impact that one child may have on another, are also not well considered. More could be done to ensure that there is a robust approach to planning to help children settle into the home quickly.

Not enough is being done to meet one child's identity needs. There is uncertainty among the staff about the gender identity of this child, and not enough has been done to promote their cultural needs.

Two children have made progress with their confidence, understanding their emotions, and their education. However, more could be done to further support children with achieving good outcomes. There is a lack of focus on children's goals and targets, which means that opportunities to help children progress are lacking.

The home is well presented, feels homely and is welcoming. Children are encouraged to have a say over the decoration of their rooms, and they take pride in how their bedrooms are presented.

The relationships between the child and staff are warm, loving and nurturing, staff clearly care deeply for children, and this is evident in the way that they are spoken about. Children's memories are preserved in memory books which are beautifully presented, and which are full of fond memories.

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

Risk assessments are not robust; they lack clarity and clear guidance on how staff are to effectively support children. In addition, there are vulnerabilities in staff knowledge and practice relating to safeguarding.

One child's care plan outlines that staff should directly monitor their use of the internet, which has been implemented with advice from social care. In practice, staff are not taking a sufficiently careful approach to supervising this child's internet use. Two external professionals raised their concern that this may have led to the child being exposed to inappropriate websites.

Staff engage with meaningful conversations with children to help them learn about the risks that they face. However, these are not held frequently enough. In addition, when children approach staff with problems and concerns not enough action is taken to help children overcome difficulties.

When children raise concerns around staff practice, these are taken seriously and appropriately investigated. At times, appropriate referrals are made to external agencies. However, this is not consistent with one referral being delayed, and one being missed. There is appropriate feedback to children once investigations are complete, and where children have moved on from the home, efforts are made to provide feedback via social care professionals.

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

A lack of effective management oversight has meant that aspects of staff practice that are concerning have been overlooked. In addition, when significant incidents have taken place, management oversight has focused on the child's experience rather than a critical analysis of staff practice. This has meant that weak aspects of staff practice have not always been addressed.

Team meetings and supervisions take place regularly and include some reflection on how staff are working with children, and children's feelings. However, more could be done to consider how staff practice can improve, and how children can be helped to make further progress. A lack of critical reflection around staff practice has meant that opportunities to identify alternative strategies to help children have been missed.

Staff who work in the home say that they are supported well, they are proud of the children's achievements and what they achieve for children as a close staff team. Staff speak positively of the manager and feel that they can raise concerns as needed.

Family members report that there is good communication between them and the staff. One grandparent commented that their grandchild has good relationships with staff and

generally presents as happy. External professionals say that children have good relationships with staff and have nice experiences. One professional said that there had been a lack of effective multi-agency working to ensure a cohesive approach to care planning for one child.

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. Have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— That each child's relevant plans are followed (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that children have clear plans, which are informed by relevant external agencies, and which help staff to provide consistent support to children. Staff should be knowledgeable about how they are to support children in line with their plans, and they should apply this to their practice. In addition, the registered person should ensure that moves into and out of the home are carefully planned and that efforts are made to ensure that all information is known about children prior to them coming to live at the home.	16 December 2025
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—	16 December 2025

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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to help keep children safe. Managers and staff should have a sound understanding of safeguarding and the important role of external professionals in helping to keep children safe. In addition, the registered person should ensure that where children present risk-taking behaviours, staff support children in line with their plans to ensure that they are kept safe.	
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person should have effective oversight of staff practice to ensure that staff are adhering to children's plans. Additionally, the registered person should have effective oversight of incidents occurring in the home in order to ensure that there is a robust analysis of staff practice, allowing for learning and reflection to take place regularly.	16 December 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are understanding of, and are regularly promoting, children's unique identity needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2748977

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Blue Elephant Childcare Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Cera Pudney

Registered manager: Alexandra Williams

Inspector

Minnette Sims, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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