

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.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted on 11 October 2024.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 April 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	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 applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children living in the home make good progress. Carers have supported them to communicate, better manage their emotions, and gain independence skills well. Conversations between carers and children are sensitive, thoughtful, and child centred. This has led to children forming trusting relationships with carers.

Carers enable children to express their needs, wishes and feelings. When children have required additional support to communicate, they are provided with the time and support they need to develop their autonomy and make their own choices. Recordings provide an excellent insight into the day-to-day lives of children. If children were to look at these in later life, they would provide a comprehensive narrative of their experiences. Memory books that document children's experiences are completed to a high standard.

Carers prioritise children's learning and recognise the benefits of them having a routine. They work with other professionals to identify appropriate educational settings for children in a timely manner. When children are not attending a formal education setting, carers formulate bespoke timetables of educational and physical activities and complete these with them. Children said that they enjoy these activities.

The health needs of children are prioritised and met. Medical advice and attention are sought promptly, ensuring that children receive the medical care and attention that they need. Accessing readily available clinical advice and support allows carers to plan sensitive pieces of work for children, such as grief and life-story work.

Carers build positive relationships with external professionals. Two professionals were positive about the care provided to children and the relationships that carers have formed with them and with children. Concerns are escalated in a timely manner, and the rights of children are advocated for. Carers have been instrumental in supporting two children to have a positive move from the home.

The decision-making for children to move in to the home considers essential information. Children receive a positive welcome, with relationship building activities beginning before they move in. External professionals are consulted, and the views of carers working in the home are gained. However, there is a lack of evaluation and analysis of how different children's needs and behaviours may impact on other children and how carers will support children with this.

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

Children like living in the home and have positive relationships with carers. They like their bedrooms and make good use of the home's ample outside areas, where they enjoy activities such as skateboarding, roller skating, and trampolining. They talk to carers about their concerns. Carers provide children with appropriate affection, positive

affirmation, boundaries and stimulation. They are aware that children do not always get on, which can cause difficulties. This has been addressed by adapting practice to provide children with time together and time apart, therefore supporting them to develop these delicate relationships.

The relationships between children and their families are prioritised. Concerns around safety during family time are robustly addressed, and safety planning is implemented. Carers acknowledge that children are unique and work to understand children's individual needs. Carers talk to children about their experiences and narratives, which enables them to provide targeted advice and support when required.

Carers have a good knowledge and understanding of risk. They are committed to keeping children safe. Carers follow plans that are devised to support them to care for children's individual needs. Chronologies provide a useful overview of ongoing risk and the progress that children make. Incidents of bullying within the external school environment were dealt with immediately and sensitively. Direct work with children is meaningful, particularly in relation to supporting children to manage and process trauma.

Incidents rarely happen in the home. When they do, carers manage these well. They intervene appropriately and spend time with children afterwards. Children are supported to reflect on their behaviours towards others and to understand why other people may behave in certain ways. Restraint has not been used. Proportionate physical intervention has been appropriately used on two occasions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers are present within the home and know the children who live there. They talk about them with passion and strive to provide them with the love and care that they need. The registered manager and senior care worker have a positive working relationship, which enables the effective running and management of the busy home. Management oversight is present throughout the children's files. It considers the quality of care provided to children and sets out actions that need to be taken.

Carers talk positively about leaders and managers. They feel that they are part of a strong team who work together under the guidance of their registered manager and senior care worker. They attend child-inclusive and practice-focused team meetings. Carers have built positive relationships with their senior leadership team. They would not hesitate to contact them for guidance or support if they needed to.

Managers provide carers with regular, good-quality and reflective supervision. There is a clear focus on children and how carers are meeting their needs, as well as the well-being and development of carers. Carers report that they can talk openly to leaders and managers. Carers like working in the home and report that supervision is beneficial in informing and improving their practice.

The home practices safer recruitment. Concerns about the practice of carers are taken seriously. Thorough investigations are completed. Carers and children are spoken to and, when necessary, external agencies. On one occasion, following a concern being raised by a child, a decision was made not to follow the complaint process. This meant that the child did not receive a formal response in relation to their negative experience.

Training and development are valued by leaders and managers. New and essential training opportunities are researched and commissioned for the team. This has included specialist training in relation to meeting children's specific needs. Carers can identify the positive impact that training has had on them and link it to their practice.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children receive a full and appropriate response following an incident where they have been harmed or upset by carers. If a child makes the decision not to follow up on a complaint, the age and understanding of a child should be considered when determining what action should be taken.	30 June 2024
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended	30 June 2024

that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.
(Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that a robust evaluation and analysis of the needs of individual children and how these will be met are completed before a decision is made for a child to move into the home.

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 EX31 4FT

Responsible individual: Lucy Squire

Registered manager: Alexandra Williams

Inspector

Carla Simkiss, Social Care Inspector

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