

2797076

Registered provider: SBL Care Services (UK) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private organisation. The home is registered as a multi-building children's home. The home provides care for up to four children living across three buildings under a single registration.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The home and the manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024.
This was the first inspection since the home was registered.

Inspection dates: 29 April and 30 April 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

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: outstanding

Children have extremely positive experiences living in the home. Children build strong and trusting relationships with managers and staff. These relationships help children to make significant and sustained progress in all areas of their lives. Children enjoy living in the home and speak highly about the outstanding levels of care they receive from a consistent staff team. One child spoke about how they are 'safe' living in the home and another child said the home was, 'The best place I have ever lived.'

The home is maintained to an excellent standard and provides children with a warm, comfortable space to feel safe and nurtured. Throughout the home there are photos of children's experiences and activities. Children can make decisions about their day-to-day care and personalise their bedrooms to their taste. This helps each child to have a strong sense of belonging as each home creates a family environment.

Children's needs are met exceptionally well by the staff team. Each child has detailed and individualised plan in place to ensure that they are supported to make progress in key areas of their lives. Children contribute to their plans. This helps children to recognise their progress and make decisions about important areas of their lives.

Children are supported to complete age-appropriate independence tasks in preparation for their futures. Staff support children to complete new skills and develop their resilience. This improves children's self-esteem and confidence. Children have detailed key-work sessions to support their learning on a range of topics, including health, hygiene, emotional well-being and incentives.

Staff ensure that children's physical health needs are met. They encourage healthy eating, and children are involved with food shopping and meal planning. Staff provide personalised support to each child to ensure that their emotional needs are met. For one child, managers and staff recognised that the child needed timely therapeutic support which could not be offered by local services, due to long waiting lists. The manager sourced a privately funded therapist to ensure that the child received immediate support. This has improved the child's emotional regulation and helped them to develop alternative strategies for self-harming behaviour.

Children are encouraged and supported to try new activities and hobbies. The children like to go to the gym and keep fit. One child enjoys boxing and trains several times a week. They have developed friendships and integrated well into the local community. Managers and staff provide children with access to new opportunities. They are currently planning a holiday for each of the children. The manager is applying for children's provisional driving licences to support them to learn to drive.

Children are engaging in education in line with their needs and plans. A school placement has been identified for one child and the manager continues to ensure that funding is not a barrier to his learning. He is a strong advocate for the child to ensure that they are able to start at the school without delay. Two children have gained employment locally, which is allowing them opportunities to build their employment skills for the future. Staff have supported children to explore career paths and have attended open days at local colleges to ensure that children understand what options are available to them.

Staff develop positive relationships with children's parents and families and do not allow distance to be a barrier for children to see the people they are close to. This has helped some children to build better and stronger relationships with their family. One parent said, 'I actually see them more now than I did before.' One parent also highlighted the high-quality care the child receives in the home and said, 'I am so proud of the brilliant progress they have made;' 'they have done things we never thought they would do' and 'they love it there.'

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

Safeguarding practice in the home is excellent. Managers and staff know the children exceptionally well and demonstrate an excellent understanding of their needs and risks. Risk management plans are detailed and individualised. They are reviewed regularly and provide staff with clear strategies to follow. Children say they are safe living in the home and have a sense of well-being.

Children's relationships with staff and the use of effective behaviour support plans means that children's behaviour is managed well. Staff speak to children with openness and honesty and children feel respected and valued. One child said, 'They speak to me like I am a teenager and listen to what I say.' Children who move into the home with high risks of physical or verbal aggression quickly settle and staff talk to children to resolve any concerns. Therefore, there have been no serious incidents in the homes and the children's risks have reduced.

Staff provide exceptional support to children through key-work sessions to develop children's understanding of a range of risks, including the use of social media, knife crime and misogyny. Staff completed an excellent piece of work by supporting children to watch a TV programme to highlight the impact and consequences of knife crime. Managers also used this opportunity to educate staff of the importance of being vigilant to how children communicate online. This supports effective safeguarding.

Staff ensure that children have clear routines and boundaries. Children are supported to set targets, which encourages them to achieve rewards and incentives. This helps children to focus on positive behaviours and progress.

Staff adopt a restorative approach to promote positive behaviour in the home. There is a focus on praise and reward when a child makes progress. This helps children to learn appropriate positive behaviours through gaining incentives. This has been highly

effective as children learn how to manage their emotions and the importance of mutual respect towards others.

Leaders and managers employ staff using safer recruitment processes that ensure that only suitable people work in the home.

There have been no complaints. However, children understand what to do if they need to raise any concerns. Staff are clear on whistle-blowing procedures to keep children safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is aspirational about the children in his care. He is child centred and wants all the children to have new opportunities and reach their full potential. He is supported by an experienced deputy manager and a committed responsible individual.

The manager welcomes feedback and wants to provide the very best service to children. He shares an excellent relationship with the children living in the home and knows each child extremely well. He manages his time effectively in order to ensure that he is a visible presence in the homes.

Leaders and managers ensure that the home is managed in a competent, effective and professional manner. Recording is clear, accessible and organised. There are detailed records in place which highlight children's experiences and progress. Each child has a bespoke achievement record which captures their successes and experiences of living in the home and includes personal photos.

Leaders and managers implement creative and innovative strategies to improve the quality of care being provided to children. The manager implements research-informed practice in the home, and there has been a recent focus on trauma-informed approaches.

Children are cared for by an established and experienced staff team, whose members have all worked in the home since it was registered. This provides children with consistent care. Staff retention is high due to staff being happy and supported in their work. They receive regular high-quality supervision and team meetings.

The members of the staff team feel valued and listened to. They speak highly of the manager and say that working relationships are based on respect and highly effective teamwork. One staff member said, 'I love working here.' Another staff member stated that the organisation 'goes above and beyond to support both staff and children' and another said, 'I feel like part of a family and not just a replaceable number.'

Staff receive a range of training in line with children's needs. Staff experience good quality training. A high number of staff are qualified, and newer staff are enrolled on an appropriate qualification in relation to working in residential childcare.

Staff are provided with excellent opportunities to develop their skills and knowledge. The manager consults with the staff team to identify any areas that required further development. The manager uses this feedback to implement new ways to upskill the staff team. The manager provides opportunities for staff to develop their skills through scenario-based learning. This prepares staff to understand their roles in managing incidents.

The manager has effective monitoring and review systems in place to ensure that he has full oversight of all aspects of the home. The manager benefits from regular quality assurance visits completed by the responsible individual. The independent visitor completes monthly visits to the home and produces detailed reports. However, this additional oversight of the home could be enhanced by including unannounced visits.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. In particular, the independent person's visits to the home should include unannounced visits. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 2797076

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: SBL Care Services (UK) Limited

Registered provider address: 17 St Peter's Place, Fleetwood, Lancashire, England
FY7 6EB

Responsible individual: Graham Ayres

Registered manager: Matthew Wilding

Inspector

Suzanne Birchall, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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