

2801609

Registered provider: Brighter Beginnings (HW) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private provider and offers care for up to three children who have experienced social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities. At the time of this inspection one child was living in the home. This is the only child that has lived in the home since its registration. They were spoken to as part of the inspection.

The home was registered in October 2024. The registered manager has been in post since registration.

The responsible individual left the home shortly after registration. However, they applied to Ofsted to be the responsible individual again in March 2025. This appointment was confirmed in May 2025.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 July 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean that the child is not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of the child is poor.

Date of last inspection: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Despite making some progress, the child's overall experiences are negatively impacted on by the failings in the home. This includes the poor quality of the environment, inconsistent care, significant shortfalls in how they are helped and protected, and inadequate leadership and management of the home.

The home environment is not maintained to a good standard. There is a lot of damage to the home, which is sparsely furnished as some damaged items have not been replaced or repaired swiftly. Most of the rooms in the home are locked and the child is not permitted to freely access them. The sound of staffs' keys rattling and the locking and unlocking of doors are commonplace and further detract from the child's experiences. By accepting a poor-quality environment for the child, staff have not demonstrated high aspirations for them.

The child's bedroom is wholly unsuitable. Two dirty mattresses are on the floor, alongside the child's laundry and discarded rubbish. There is no furniture, and the walls are damaged and graffitied with abusive comments. Leaders and managers have not ensured that the child receives sufficient support to help them to make their bedroom a welcoming space for them to spend time in.

The child's plans are not reflective of their current needs. As a result, they do not support staff to care for the child effectively. The support that staff offer to the child is not consistent with the approaches outlined in the home's statement of purpose. The child's plans do not tell staff what the intended outcomes are for the child, how to achieve this, or how to review and evaluate progress.

Despite the serious shortfalls in the quality of care and home environment, the child is making some progress. When they moved to the home, they had been out of education for a prolonged period. However, with staff support, they have started to engage with a tutor for a few hours per day outside of the classroom environment. Staff have helped the tutor to tailor their sessions to meet the needs of the child.

In addition, the child is receiving a healthier diet and is more physically active. They particularly enjoy playing football in the local park and they have made some friends while doing this. The child has also enjoyed going to the cinema, going bowling and participating in escape-room challenges.

Staff support the child to regularly spend time with their family members. As a result of these enduring and positive relationships, staff have been able to work with family members to help the child to attend some health appointments, which is something that they have previously struggled to do.

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

Staff struggle to respond to the child effectively when the child is upset or angry. Staff do not have the skills or knowledge that they need to help the child to express themselves safely. As a result, the support that is offered to the child often escalates risky situations.

The use of restraint is not always necessary and proportionate to the risk of harm. On at least one occasion staff used restraint techniques that they are not trained to use and are not in the child's care plan. This posed an increased risk to the child's welfare. Restraint records are poorly written, and it is often difficult to understand what happened.

When leaders and managers identified concerns about the use of restraint during one incident, they failed to report the concerns to all the relevant professionals. Although leaders and managers stopped the member of staff from working in the home, no other action was taken. As a result, the child was left to believe that the actions of the member of staff were acceptable. Further, the member of staff was able to continue to work with children in other settings, without appropriate actions being taken to protect children from harm. These concerns were appropriately reported during the inspection.

Following incidents, staff do not always receive support to reflect on what happened or what they could do differently in the future. Leaders and managers do not always evaluate the effectiveness of the support that is provided by staff, so important learning opportunities are missed. As a result, significant incidents have continued to take place and staff have struggled to manage these effectively.

Insufficient management oversight means actions to promote fire safety have been overlooked. The risk of fire has not been reviewed since the child moved to the home, despite this being recommended by the fire authority. Although fire drills are held regularly, they do not demonstrate that staff and the child can safely evacuate the building on hearing the fire alarm. Difficulties that are encountered during an evacuation are not always identified or explored. As a result, strategies to overcome barriers to safe and prompt evacuation are not implemented.

Staff help the child to stay safe online and suitable parental controls are in place. However, some opportunities to develop the child's understanding of how to stay safe online are missed.

There have been occasions when the child has become upset and angry and walked away from the home. On these occasions, staff have followed the child and supported them to return to the home. As a result, staff have prevented the child from being exposed to increased risk in the community.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers did not robustly consider whether staff could meet the child's needs and help them to stay safe before they moved into the home. As a result, leaders and managers were not able to plan the child's care effectively. Leaders failed to critically analyse staff skills, experience and knowledge. This left staff ill-equipped to support the child.

Leaders and managers do not have robust systems in place to ensure oversight and monitoring of staff training needs. Some members of staff have not completed the training that would improve their capacity to meet the child's needs. As a result, not all members of staff have the skills and knowledge that they require to provide good-quality care to the child.

Staff team meetings vary in quality and helpfulness to staff. There are some discussions about the child and how to support them effectively. However, actions to help staff improve the care that is provided to the child are not always identified or completed.

Staff supervision sessions are ineffective. They do not provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on the needs of the child, the care that they provide or how to mitigate risk. The registered manager has identified this vulnerability and is taking action to ensure that staff supervision sessions are impactful.

The registered manager has demonstrated a commitment to providing the child with stability and helping them to become increasingly safe. Unfortunately, the registered manager has not received consistent or sufficient support from senior leaders. Some of the systems that are in place to evaluate the quality of care that is provided to the child, and to help the registered manager to make improvements to their care, have been ineffective. There is a lack of opportunities for learning, developing best practice and reflection.

The registered manager has developed a positive relationship with the child, and they are responsive to the cues that indicate that the child is feeling upset or anxious. However, some members of staff are unaware of the significance of these behavioural cues and do not respond proactively to support the child.

The child says that living in the home is 'ok' and that they get on well with most of the staff. Staff interactions with the child are mostly friendly, light-hearted, and caring, and the child enjoys spending time with most of them. Before the inspection, the child's placing authority had started planning for the child to move out of the home.

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
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); and serious damage to the property of any person (including the child). Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that every restraint that is used with children is necessary and proportionate to the risk of harm. Restraint records must clearly describe what happened to enable the registered person to do this effectively. In addition, staff must only use restraint techniques that they have been trained in and that are in line with the provider's approach to the care and support of children.	22 September 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— 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;	22 September 2025

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that concerns about staffs' practice towards children are swiftly shared with the relevant professionals. Immediate and ongoing action must be taken to safeguard children.	
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; and ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the actions that are identified on the home's fire risk assessment are completed promptly. Further, the registered person must use fire drills effectively to ensure that staff and children are able to safely evacuate the building on hearing the fire alarm. When barriers to safe and swift evacuation are identified, the registered person must make arrangements to support safe evacuation.	22 September 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and 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—	22 September 2025

that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

(Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that before children move to the home their needs and associated risks are carefully considered. The registered person must review the skills and experience of the staff team to ensure that children's needs can be met and that they can be helped to stay safe effectively.

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—

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;

ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;

understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(f)(h))

In particular, the registered person should ensure that children's plans are up-to-date and reflective of the care and support that they require. Further, the registered person must maintain

22 September 2025

oversight of staff training needs to ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge that they need to deliver personalised care and help children to stay safe effectively. The registered person must use oversight and monitoring systems to ensure that the care that is provided to children is effective. When actions are agreed through care planning processes, the registered person must ensure that they are completed promptly and not left to drift. The registered person must ensure that children and staff are supported to reflect on their behaviour and/or practice. This must include how children and staff could respond differently in the future to achieve more positive outcomes. The registered person must evaluate the effectiveness of the use of restraint and ensure that learning opportunities for staff are identified. The registered person must ensure that they receive the support and guidance from senior leaders that they require. If the registered person determines that the support from senior leaders is insufficient, they should escalate their concerns, as per the home's policies.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; protect and promote each child's welfare; provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;	22 September 2025

help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect;

provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;

ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—

meet the needs of each child; and

enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.
(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that the home is suitably furnished for children and that repairs are completed swiftly. This includes in children's bedrooms. The registered person must seek to reduce the environmental restrictions that are used in the home so that children are able to access all areas of their home, as per risk assessment.

In addition, the registered person must ensure that the care and support that is offered to children is consistent with the home's statement of purpose and children's individual care plans.

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: 2801609

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brighter Beginnings (HW) Limited

Registered provider address: 71-75 Shelton Street, 1st Formations, Covent Garden, London WC2H 9JQ

Responsible individual: Alison Turrell

Registered manager: Sharon Gitau

Inspector

Martin Brown, Social Care Inspector

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