

SC484912

Blandford House

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private home that provides care for up to 10 children with learning disabilities and/or autistic spectrum conditions.

The home has been registered with Ofsted since February 2015. The manager registered with Ofsted February 2025. At the time of this inspection, 6 children were living at the home.

The inspector was aware during this inspection of an ongoing investigation by the appropriate authorities, which is not related to any actions taken by the setting. Actions taken by the setting in response to the investigation were considered, where appropriate, alongside other evidence available at the time of the inspection to inform the inspector's judgements.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 March 2026

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	good
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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: 25 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2025	Full	Good
21/02/2024	Full	Good
17/01/2023	Full	Good
16/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living at this home receive highly individualised care from staff, with whom they form meaningful and long-lasting relationships. The environment in which children are cared for is warm, nurturing and considerate of children's individual sensory and personal needs. Consequently, children are settled in the home, thriving and making significant progress.

Effective communication between children's education providers and staff ensures continuity of care, promoting children's ability to make the most of the time they spend in education. Managers and staff strongly advocate for appropriate provision when children are not receiving a suitable education.

Understanding and acting upon the wishes and feelings of children is a very strong focus for staff and managers and helps to ensure that children's needs are understood and met. The environment in the home provides opportunities for children to use a range of communication methods, including picture exchange and electronic devices. This, combined with staff's in-depth understanding of each child's unique ways of communicating, promotes children's ability to make positive choices about their care and health needs.

Staff support children to engage in a range of social and leisure activities based on their interests and preferences. Staff demonstrate high levels of resilience, patience and commitment to ensuring that children have positive experiences in their lives. This might include swimming, nature walks, ordering a pizza from a takeaway or visiting local attractions. Evidence of children's engagement in activities is visible throughout the home and children have their own personal photographic records. These activities enrich children's experiences and their confidence in social settings and the community.

Managers and staff understand the importance of children keeping in touch with family and those who are important to them. Staff support children to see family either in the home or in the community. Where children have limited communication with family, managers and staff work effectively with 'lifelong links' coordinators to support meaningful relationships with others in the family network. This reduces the sense of isolation that children may experience.

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

Staff support children to express their views about how safe they feel living in the home. Staff use individual communication methods to help ensure that children's views are articulated and heard. Children said, 'I like living at [the home] and I feel safe here' and, 'Staff help to keep me safe and make sure I am looked after.' Children have a strong sense of feeling safe in the home by vigilant and attentive staff.

Managers and staff understand the vulnerabilities of children very well. Safety plans to reduce the likelihood of harm are comprehensive, regularly reviewed and updated. Managers consult with internal and external professionals frequently to ensure that children's care and support are consistently meeting their needs. Consequently, children's safety plans are highly individualised to ensure that risks for children are well known and understood. Staff have clear strategies that they use to keep children safe from harm.

One-to-one sessions are completed with children to help them understand their own vulnerabilities and the need for staff to support them. Staff supported one child to communicate their thoughts. They said, 'Staff care how I feel and ask me every day, and I use the emotions boards to let them know if I am happy, sad, tired, scared or worried or if I am not feeling well.' The use of the emotions board by staff to check in on children during the day adds an additional element of safeguarding for children in the home.

Instances of children going missing from the home are rare. However, there is a clear plan in place for staff to follow should this occur. There have been no physical interventions in the home. Staff are trained to use them only when there is an imminent risk of harm. This demonstrates the strength of relationships that children have with staff and each other.

Leaders and managers' response to the current ongoing investigations demonstrates their ability to effectively review safeguarding policy and practice and work collaboratively with social workers and appropriate authorities, reinforcing that children continue to be safe in the home. The level of openness, transparency and communication demonstrated by leaders and managers has enabled external professionals to be assured that children's safety and wellbeing is paramount.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are active, visible and available in the home to children and staff, and spend quality time interacting with children. Their passion for ensuring that a positive environment is created for both children and staff is clearly evident in their day-to-day practice.

Leaders and managers collaborate closely with staff to achieve the aims of the home. However, currently, there is no named responsible individual, who has had their suitability assessed by Ofsted, in post. This presents a shortfall in respect of the supervision and management oversight of the home. Leaders and managers are taking action to remedy this situation. The requirement and recommendation made at the last inspection have been met.

Leaders and managers work hard to ensure that the environment for children provides them with stimulating and calming experiences in a family environment. The decoration of some rooms to enhance the colours and textures is underway, as well as the completion of a purpose-built sensory room.

Staff say that they are well supported by leaders and managers. Staff receive regular supervision, which focuses on their wellbeing and development as well as the progress of children and safeguarding. Staff are encouraged to develop initiatives to support the care of children. This has resulted in a new children's guide that can be individualised for children. Training for staff is frequent and specific to children's needs.

Leaders and managers know the strengths of the service and areas that require further development. This has led to managers reviewing policies and procedures to ensure that they remain fit for purpose. A focus has been placed on improving the quality of recording and strengthening consistency of the use of visual communication tools across the home. Management oversight of the home has improved and is more consistently evident.

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
An organisation may only carry on a home if— each director of the organisation, except for a director who is the responsible individual, who is involved in the carrying on of a home by that organisation satisfies the requirements in paragraph (6); and the organisation has notified HMCI of the name, address and position in the organisation of the responsible individual. The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2; the individual is mentally and physically fit to carry on the home. A responsible individual must— satisfy the requirements in paragraph (5)(a) to (c); and have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (4)(i)(ii) (5)(a)(b)(c) (7)(a)(b))	1 July 2026

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: SC484912

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Rachael Pabla

Inspector

Colin Bent, Social Care Inspector

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