

2502333

Registered provider: Brighter Futures for Children

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short breaks service was re-registered under Brighter Futures for Children on 29 November 2018. The home can provide respite care for up to six children at a time who have a learning disability and/or physical disability and/or sensory impairment.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2018.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 December 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: this is the home's first inspection since re-registration

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Inspection type

Inspection judgement

This is the home's first inspection since re-registration.

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, 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 registered person must notify HMCI of any revisions (to the statement of purpose) and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b))	24/01/2020

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children enjoy excellent relationships with staff, which is evident through the children’s laughter and broad smiles. Staff care for the children with tenderness, warmth and love. This creates an atmosphere which is nurturing and supportive, in which the children thrive.

Children benefit immensely from their short breaks and look forward to them. The well-established staff team ensures that the children receive consistent and thoughtful care. This includes working closely with families and professionals, actively seeking their views and sharing strategies to enable the staff to work towards shared goals. This was confirmed by a parent who commented that the home is a ‘wonderful supportive place, filled with caring and proactive staff, who create a really safe environment for our son to thrive, play and develop’.

Staff focus on the children doing their best, seeing beyond their disability. As a result, children make excellent progress in developing new skills and improving their communication according to their ability. For example, one child is now able to say their name and reacts to staff and other children’s presence through lifting their head. Another child has developed their social skills through visiting a local cafe. Staff capture these ‘star moments’ by awarding the children a certificate to celebrate their successes.

The children’s identity and cultural needs are threaded through all aspects of their care. Examples include catering for specific dietary needs and supporting a child to say a prayer before bedtime. Children were involved in Black History Month and Children in Need, which involved making beautiful displays of colourful decorations and different handprints.

Staff provide a range of stimulating activities and encourage play. Examples include a range of activities such as art projects and messy play, and relaxing in the sensory room. Staff plan larger scale activities during the weekends and holidays, and the children have been able to enjoy a day out at a nature park and a river trip. Staff capture the children's responses to these activities, and when a child is unable to provide their response independently, staff look at the photographs of the children's reactions as a method to assess their enjoyment of the activity.

Staff introduce new topics through the house meetings and visual displays. This enables the children to gain awareness on subjects such as fire, and stranger danger. Staff use creative ways to involve the children, taking into consideration their individual needs and level of understanding to promote their awareness.

Generally, the home is well maintained and decorated, with a good range of resources such as the sensory and art room and a range of toys and games. Children's bedrooms are decorated in calming colour schemes, with colourful pictures and patterned soft furnishings making each room feel fun and inviting. Leaders and managers are progressing plans to refresh the decor and enhance the garden, which has recently become overgrown, as part of the plans to develop the home.

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

Children are safe and feel safe in this home. They demonstrate this through their relaxed and confident manner around staff. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge in how to protect and safeguard the children. This includes recording and reporting their concerns appropriately and escalating any concerns related to a child's welfare. Staff recognise the children's vulnerability and do not become complacent, remaining alert to the possibility of abuse.

The registered manager has developed an effective impact assessment to consider the suitability of children being referred to the home. She identifies which group of children would be the best match, taking into consideration the child's ability and level of need. As a result, children are well matched, with opportunities to socialise and have fun with other children to support their personal development.

Excellent practice in behaviour management means that there is a low level of incidents, as children are helped to reduce their anxiety and manage their behaviour. Detailed plans describe what behaviours a child may display, with clear strategies on how to manage these if they occur. There is no use of physical interventions or sanctions in the home.

Key workers play a crucial role in ensuring that all necessary documentation is in place. This includes keeping the children's support plans up to date. Such plans are clearly laid out, easy to read, and provide a clear oversight of each child's needs. Key workers play a central role in advocating for the child and will challenge other professionals when

required.

The staff work closely with health services to meet the children's varied and complex needs. Healthcare plans provide detailed and clear guidance for staff. Staff are trained and regularly assessed to ensure that they are competent in undertaking delegated healthcare tasks. Medication administration processes are strong, with staff applying great care and diligence to ensure that medication protocols are followed.

The registered manager ensures that safer recruitment practice is followed so that only adults deemed to be suitable to work with children are employed. This extends to her expectations that employment agencies should provide the same level of certification and assurance so that they adhere to safer recruitment practice.

Staff use a range of equipment to support children who have a physical disability. Consents and risk management plans outline the safe use of equipment and measures in place to safeguard the children's welfare. The registered manager monitors all aspects of health and safety. This ensures that the environment is kept free from hazards, and the children are kept safe from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is conscientious, meticulous and ambitious. She leads a team that is equally motivated and capable. Their shared vision ensures that the children receive an outstanding level of care and meaningful experiences.

The manager is forward thinking, looking for innovative ideas as to how she can improve and enhance this outstanding service. She has effective systems in place to monitor, scrutinise and evaluate care practice. These include using suggestions from the independent visitor and feedback from families, professionals and staff. Actions identified feed into the home's development plan, which the manager monitors closely to assess the progress being made in achieving its aims.

The manager goes to great lengths to ensure that staff have the relevant training, knowledge and qualifications to look after the children in their care. The manager and key staff have gained the necessary qualification to deliver training to the team. This includes safeguarding and, more recently, manual handling and therapeutic approaches to behaviour. This ensures ongoing development and strengthening of the skills set of the team.

The manager is continually adapting systems to use what 'works best' in the children's interest. New methods have been introduced to gain the views of the children following each visit, and the experiences and progress of the children are captured through the home's 'life story', which shows how the children are involved in the day-to-day life of the home, making choices and taking part in various activities. Children enjoy looking through this book with staff, and it helps them to indicate what things they have enjoyed and may like to do again.

Weekly team meetings enable the staff to share information, which ensures the efficient and smooth running of the home. Child-led discussions ensure that the staff have up-to-date knowledge of any changes to the children's care. For example, one child's parents came in to speak to the team about the introduction of a new diet and healthcare programme for their child. Staff valued this opportunity, which complemented the formal training they received to manage this change in the child's healthcare.

Staff achieve the aims of the home's statement of purpose. Children enjoy excellent care during their short breaks, accessing the service over many years. The manager has updated the statement of purpose to include changes in staff; however, this has not been sent to Ofsted within the correct time frame. Therefore, the regulator has not been kept up to date with these changes.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 2502333

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brighter Futures for Children

Registered provider address: Reading Borough Council, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading, Berkshire RG1 2LU

Responsible individual: Kate Reynolds

Registered manager: Helena Macieira Baptista

Inspector

Joe Davys, 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
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