

# 2502333

Registered provider: Brighter Futures for Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides short breaks for up to six children at one time. The home provides care to children who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 10 May 2022.

### Inspection dates: 25 and 26 October 2022

**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 **good**

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:** 20 July 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/07/2021	Full	Outstanding
12/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/12/2019	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Staff love and value the children for their unique personalities. They know the children's likes and dislikes extremely well and arrange activities and outings to suit, such as visiting the beach and going on train rides. Staff expertly ensure that activities are meticulously planned. Consequently, these opportunities significantly enhance children's experiences, particularly as many of them have previously found trips of this nature challenging. Children's body language shows that they feel comfortable and relaxed in the presence of staff.

Staff build on children's education targets to ensure that children make excellent progress. For example, they encourage children to use symbols and speech sounds in line with their relevant plans. As a result, children make exceptional progress in their communication and language skills. Staff keep children's individual goals under regular review and celebrate their achievements with parents and social workers. A member of staff said, 'This way of working helps children transfer the skills to a different setting and promotes their self-esteem and independence.'

Staff spend quality time with children. They use many creative approaches to help children to show how they are feeling. Staff also seek children's views on developments in the home. For example, staff are consulting children about a mural, designed by a local artist, for the stairwell. Children have also recently chosen the wall colours in the downstairs bedrooms and communal areas.

The registered manager has reviewed how staff record conversations with children. This includes how children's views are captured before their statutory reviews and as they grow towards adulthood. Staff speak confidently with children about a range of topics. These include children's developing identities, same sex families and children's future aspirations. Children receive certificates of participation after sharing their views, underpinning the value of children's thoughts and opinions.

The registered manager has devised an innovative new template to show how children are safely grouped together when visiting the home. She carefully considers the positive contributions that each child brings, as well as their risks and health needs. Staff regularly discuss children at team meetings, and children's groupings are altered when necessary. This means that children can form meaningful friendships safely.

Long-serving, committed and skilled staff understand children's needs and vulnerabilities extremely well. This helps children grow in confidence and develop as independent individuals. Staff sensitively support children to be active members of their communities, for example by helping them to raise money for charities and engage in litter picking. This builds children's self-esteem, helps them to make positive contributions and enhances their employment opportunities.

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

Children are safe and are very happy visiting the home. They show this through their smiles and constant interaction with staff. Children display their affection towards staff through their behaviour and communication. Staff know and understand children extremely well. Consequently, they are able to respond sensitively and naturally, providing the comfort and play that children seek. Staff instinctively display genuine care and affection to children while sensitively maintaining professional boundaries.

Staff manage children's behaviours extremely well. They demonstrate a continual commitment to finding different, innovative ways to understand and proactively manage situations that children find emotionally difficult. Staff do this by working collaboratively with other professionals, parents and family members to gain insight into the children's complex needs and communication barriers. Children have positive behaviour support plans. These plans help to guide staff in how to care for children when they feel upset, worried or anxious. The plans help staff to quickly identify when something isn't right, providing clear guidance about how staff can help children to feel better again.

Children's key workers play a central role in advocating for children, and they attend regular meetings and reviews. This means that parents and professionals receive detailed first-hand information. Due to the skills of the staff, children's care plans are clearly laid out, easy to read and provide clear insight into each child's needs.

All staff receive regular, high-quality safeguarding training. Staff are confident in the processes that they need to follow should they be concerned about a child's safety. There are clear multi-agency systems in place to help with the oversight of safeguarding concerns for individual children. This means that concerns are escalated quickly, and professional safeguarding meetings are held when necessary.

Highly effective planning ensures that staff manage risk particularly effectively. No children go missing from care due to the high levels of support and staffing numbers.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

A suitably qualified registered manager has started since the last full inspection. She is experienced, dynamic and skilled in managing a children's short break setting. She has worked incredibly hard to build positive relationships with the children, staff team, parents and relevant professionals. The staff welcome her leadership and the change and challenge that this brings.

The registered manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home well. She actively uses monitoring tools and action plans to demonstrate how she is listening to ideas and driving quality forward. She has implemented several changes

in the home since the last inspection, underpinned by a dedicated staff team. A member of staff said, 'The new manager is a breath of fresh air.'

The registered manager plays an integral role, engaging in strategic conversations with stakeholders within this local authority. This supports her to understand what is more widely available and needed for local children and their families. This has inspired her to create weekly clubs for children and independence evenings for teenagers. This demonstrates her strong commitment to children and their families.

There is a new interim responsible individual for the home. They plan to have oversight until March 2023. The provider has plans to advertise for a permanent responsible individual and would like to recruit to this post by the end of this year. The interim responsible individual provides regular supervision to the registered manager and is available to managers, staff and children.

Senior leaders have not responded fully to some environmental concerns, despite the continued escalation from the registered manager. The large back garden continues to be inaccessible to children due to health and safety concerns, and the children are still waiting for a slide that they chose two years ago. To compensate for this, the registered manager ensures that children have access to the front and side gardens, which are maintained by volunteers. This enables children to enjoy some outside space. They also have access to a trampoline and water play through the summer months. The registered manager and staff ensure that children visit parks and other places that they enjoy in the local community. As a result, the lack of access to the large back garden does not detract significantly from the fun that children have at the home.

The registered manager actively works with volunteer and community service agencies to keep children's bedrooms and communal areas homely and welcoming. However, some other areas of the home need some attention. For example, some equipment needs to be updated in the sensory room and in some of the bathrooms. However, this does not compromise the excellent quality of care that all children receive.

## 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
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a) (2)(f))</p> <p>In particular, leaders must improve the garden, bathrooms and sensory room as required.</p>	<p>1 April 2023</p>

## 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:** 2502333

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Brighter Futures for Children Limited

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

**Responsible individual:** Nicola Norris

**Registered manager:** Samantha Whitehouse

## Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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