

2502334

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 can provide care for up to five children, at any one time, with a learning and/or physical and/or disability and/or sensory impairment.

The home's statement of purpose states that the home provides a shared care service to children and young people aged between eight and 18, offering a series of planned overnight stays.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2018.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

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: 23 June 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2021	Full	Good
13/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/07/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Staff offer highly personalised and well-planned care that meets children's individual needs exceptionally well. Staff gain the views of children, which are central to all aspects of their care and activities while at the home.

In April 2022, the home successfully started to support children and their families with 'shared care'. This means that children receive a three-night stay before returning to their family home for eight nights. Feedback from parents, allocated social workers, other professionals and staff is unanimously positive about the impact that the service has on children and their families.

Staff sensitively support children to move into the home at a pace suited to their individual needs and experiences. Parents and siblings are welcome to meet the staff team, explore the environment, and ask any questions that they may have. The inclusion of families in this way reduces worries and helps to build positive relationships with the staff who are caring for their loved ones. One parent said, 'Staff really take the time to understand the needs of my child and our family.'

Staff are exceptionally proactive in seeking the views of children. They creatively interact with children using a diverse range of communication methods personalised to each child's needs, helping them to have a voice in decision-making. Staff take time to understand children and to ask them how they are feeling using a range of expressive emotion symbols. This approach helps children to communicate with staff in a positive way.

The registered manager has created an exceptional outdoor space for children. Her meticulous planning and organisation means that children enjoy many different experiences in a fun and safe way. Many aspects of the garden support children's sensory interests and encourage physical exercise. Furthermore, the seating arrangements are entirely inclusive. This means that children with different abilities can all sit and enjoy the outside space together. This helps children to improve their mobility and health and to spend time with their peers.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has designed, and overseen the development of, a new sensory room. This space is modern and includes innovative technology that encourages children to play. This mirrors the technologies used in the children's schools. Consequently, children can enjoy familiar games by themselves or with friends when they stay. The adaptive lighting means that children can enjoy a colourful disco or relax in a calm and muted environment.

Staff help children to make significant progress. Children overcome prolific fears, explore new foods and activities, write celebration cards and become more independent. One child is increasing the time that they spend outside of the home,

and recently enjoyed a trip to Winter Wonderland with staff. Parents express their sincere gratitude to staff for their devotion and for helping their children to achieve their goals and overcome their fears.

The registered manager and staff planned a celebration day for children to recognise their achievements and triumphs. Staff awarded children with certificates and individually engraved wooden medals with their names on them. Children's families were invited to celebrate these successes and came together to reward children. For some families, this was the first time that they had seen their children accept an award. This extraordinary event helped children to feel proud, included and valued.

Staff support children's health needs well and these are detailed in their relevant plans. However, it is not always clear who has the overall responsibility for arranging and attending routine health appointments for children. This has not impacted on children's health or the quality of care that they receive. The registered manager is fully aware of this shortfall in recording.

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

Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities of children in their care. They also recognise and understand their roles in safeguarding children and can readily identify key external agencies that keep children safe.

The registered manager ensures that staff are safely recruited and have the skills to care for children. She ensures that all relevant checks are completed prior to staff working in the home. Her diligent processes and professional curiosity reduce the risks of unsuitable adults being recruited.

Staff manage children's emotional and behavioural needs very well. They work very effectively with parents and other professionals to gain insight into children's needs. Strategies for staff to manage children's behaviour are consistent with the techniques used in children's educational settings. This joined-up way of working helps children to feel safe and cared for in a consistent way. When children display behaviours that challenge staff, managers are quick to respond, and help staff to review and reflect on these incidents. This information is expertly collated by managers and used to evaluate the effectiveness of their strategies and the guidance that they provide to staff. This approach also ensures that specialist support for children is identified and delivered quickly when this is required.

Detailed risk assessments, combined with staff vigilance and awareness, help to ensure that children are kept safe. Clear plans are in place that guide staff to minimise risk to children, including when using restrictive equipment such as harnesses. The registered manager has started liaising with an occupational therapist to further review the guidance provided to staff when using this equipment to support children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The strong and highly effective management team is fully supported by a committed staff team and they work together extremely well. The registered manager consistently sends out positive messages to staff and communicates her high expectations about transparency and sustaining improvement. The registered manager routinely makes excellent use of a range of rigorous monitoring systems relating to the quality of care, which results in improved outcomes for children.

A new responsible individual has been appointed since the last full inspection. They plan to have oversight of this home until March 2023. The local authority has already recruited to this post and there is a plan for a detailed handover in place. The current responsible individual is providing regular supervision to the registered manager and completes quality assurance audits of children's plans. This contributes to the outstanding quality of care that children receive.

The registered manager has a clear vision. She empowers staff and supports them to improve their skills in all areas. This means that children are being supported by a highly capable workforce.

Skilled managers offer brilliant support and provide regular and reflective supervision to staff. This allows staff to reflect on their experiences, performance and professional development. Staff say that they feel supported, valued and part of the team.

The registered manager has creatively sourced funds for children through partnership working with educational professionals within the local authority. Staff have supported children to create an accomplishment list and, in doing so, have helped children to create wonderful memories. Staff support children to share these experiences during their personal education planning meetings. This helps children to explain how the support that they receive is helping them to fulfil their dreams and aspirations.

The registered manager organised an award ceremony for the staff to celebrate their achievements and successes. Individual staff were nominated for their significant contributions to children and one another. Staff say that they feel valued and appreciated for their hard work and commitment to children.

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

- The registered manager should ensure that each child's placement plan sets out the permissions that the child's placing authority has delegated to the registered person. This should provide clarity on health appointments and who is responsible for arranging them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 30, paragraph 6.2)

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: 2502334

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brighter Futures For Children Limited

Registered provider address: Reading B C Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading
Berkshire RG1 2LU

Responsible individual: Nicola Norris

Registered manager: Helena Macieira Baptista

Inspector

Kelly Monniot, Social Care Inspector

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