

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 learning or physical disabilities, or sensory impairment. There were three children staying at the home during this inspection.

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.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2018.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2024

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers outstanding

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2023	Full	Outstanding
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: good

Children benefit from nurturing care from the caring staff. The staff create an environment where there are lots of joy and laughter. Staff explore children's interests and provide them with different activities of their choice. One child had great fun playing computer games with staff, while another was keen to get involved in cooking with staff. Children enjoy familiar games and activities that they experience in their family homes. They are safely introduced to new experiences, such as outings to the theatre.

Staff are patient in their approach and take time to get to know the children. They recognise the importance of children being supported to have a voice and are proactive in seeking the children's feelings and views. Staff are mindful of the children's varied communication needs. They use children's preferred communication aids or styles to ensure that they are well understood. This includes staff signing with children or helpful pictures and symbols being used. Staff positively reinforce that the children are respected as individuals.

Staff meet the children's needs well in all areas of their lives. To achieve this, staff work closely with network professionals and children's families from the outset. This helps staff to have a well-rounded understanding of children's particular needs and how best to meet them. Staff attend children's review meetings and make valuable contributions to their care planning. One social care professional commented that staff know their child extremely well, and that their knowledge will be central to identifying a suitable adult provision for the child when needed.

Social care professionals and the children's parents value the service. The high standard of care the staff provide has contributed to children making exceptional progress. Children's communication and independence skills have developed and one child now eats well. The patience and consistency shown by staff have led to another child coping well with transitions across their home and different support services. One parent said they were proud of the progress their child has been supported to make. The progress children have made is a testament to the dedication staff have shown.

Children are encouraged to be themselves in an inclusive environment, where differences in people are respected. Children's dietary, cultural and religious needs are met by staff. One child is supported to do their prayers at bedtime as per their, and their parent's, wishes. Diversity is promoted in the home through a board displaying information on different cultural events.

Staff use an achievements board displayed in the kitchen to celebrate children's progress. A 'star of the week' display and an achievements ceremony also celebrate the particular achievements that children have made. These actions encourage self-

belief and help the children to enjoy a sense of pride. The children also get to share the special moment at the achievement ceremony with their loved ones.

The home is well maintained and welcoming. Adaptations in the home ensure that children with physical disabilities can spend time with others and participate in group activities. The home offers different spaces for children's enjoyment. These include a spacious garden with play equipment and a sensory room, where children can relax in a calm environment or enjoy a lively disco.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the children's vulnerabilities and how to minimise potential risks. They are guided by detailed risk assessments in place that are individual to each child.

Staff know the children well. They develop effective approaches for each individual child that support them when they become unsettled. Staff are attentive and vigilant when caring for the children. They quickly recognise signs that children are becoming unsettled and seek to understand how they are feeling. They are responsive to the children's non-verbal cues. Children are appropriately reassured by staff and regularly praised for the positive things they do. This encourages further positive behaviour from the children.

When incidents occur, staff use different de-escalate techniques to help the children communicate their needs and calm. Physical intervention is rarely used, and only as a last resort to ensure the safety of children and others. Staff reflection following incidents helps them to identify potential triggers for children. This informs staff practice to prevent and better manage such future situations.

Children do not go missing from the home. However, staff are aware of action to take to ensure children's safety should this happen. Staff know how to escalate concerns for children's welfare, should the need arise.

Staff are guided by health professionals and parents in meeting the children's complex health needs. They appropriately promote healthy eating and children being active. Children's support plans are updated in line with their changing needs. This ensures that the care children receive contributes to their optimum health.

On occasions when concerns have been raised regarding staff conduct, the manager has taken swift and appropriate action. This approach reinforces that the children's welfare is paramount.

Pre-employment checks are carried out to a good standard for staff recruited directly by the manager. However, the manager did not have oversight of photographic identification for two staff members recruited via an agency. This means that the manager did not have access to all relevant information to inform her recruitment decision.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is well managed by an experienced manager, who is well supported by the responsible individual. The highly effective management team has high aspirations for staff and the children. The manager and senior leaders direct a highly child-centred approach. Senior leaders have successfully instilled a positive culture of inclusivity in which staff actively encourage children's participation. The children's opinions, wishes and views are valued and acted on.

The manager leads by example. She has developed close and positive partnerships with external professionals. She reinforces the importance of staff working in partnership with all professionals involved in the children's lives. Consequently, children benefit from consistent care across the different settings they access, which meets their complex needs well.

The manager and staff have the children's best interests at heart. They go above and beyond to ensure that the children receive care and support that is responsive to their individual needs and circumstances. This has included them opening the service, when it would normally be closed, to provide additional stays for a child when their family have been in crisis.

There is great focus from the manager and senior leaders on ensuring that staff are extremely well supported to provide high-quality care to children. The manager provides staff with a wide range of relevant training. They are guided through regular supervision and reflective team meetings. Staff are supported to develop their skills and encouraged to take the lead through being assigned specific duties. This has developed a skilled staff team and staff carry out their roles effectively.

The staff feel valued and enjoy working at the home. The manager and senior leaders take time to celebrate the achievements of staff and highlight the positive things they do. This is done through a 'star of the week' display in the home and an award ceremony arranged by managers. Managers extend support to help staff regarding personal matters. The manager and senior leaders value their staff and staff well-being has been a priority. This has resulted in children being cared for by a highly motivated and stable staff team.

The manager and senior leaders are extremely passionate about the children being well cared for and great outcomes being achieved for them. Effective monitoring systems are in place, to ensure that practice is maintained at a high standard and children continue to receive outstanding care.

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

- The registered person should ensure that the recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This includes ensuring that the manager has oversight of all required employment checks carried out by agencies for agency staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: Wasiq Sumbal

Registered manager: Helena Macieira Baptista

Inspector

Sasha Reid, 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
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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