

2644474

Registered provider: Gracebridge Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Three children are living at the home at the time of the inspection. All children shared their views with the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2025 and is suitably experienced. She is currently working towards the relevant childcare qualification.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 April 2026

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 22 July 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/07/2025	Full	Good
08/07/2024	Full	Good
31/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/09/2022	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children are making good progress as a result of the high level of care and support they receive. They benefit from clear routines that support them to attend school and engage in activities they enjoy. This creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere within the home.

Strong, trusting relationships have been built between the children and the manager and staff. This promotes a clear sense of belonging and stability. The manager and staff know how to keep children safe. They speak with genuine warmth and care about the children. This helps the children feel increasingly safe and secure.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy living in the home. They say they feel cared for and they would not change anything. One child said, 'Staff understand me. This is the best home I have been in.' The manager and staff team have developed trusting relationships with the children. This has helped them to gain a sense of belonging and stability.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home, and no children have moved out. Children's moves are well planned. Children can visit the home beforehand, and daily routines are also explained to them. Thoughtful touches like welcome baskets are also provided. This helps to reduce uncertainty for children in a time of change.

Children have fun and benefit from a wide range of activities and experiences, such as trips to theme parks and zoos. A recent holiday abroad has sparked a new interest in travel for the children, which is being supported by the staff team. Experiences have created lifelong childhood memories.

All children attend school and are making academic progress. Staff encourage children to achieve, and they help them to overcome any barriers to their learning. One child is receiving additional tuition at home, which is supporting their individualised learning needs.

Children are healthy. Partnership working with specialist services is strong. This ensures that children's individual complex health needs are met. One child has a fear of visiting the dentist. Arrangements were made for a dentist to visit the home to help the child to overcome their fear. This child-sensitive approach makes children feel their health and wellbeing are a priority.

Children like their home, which is warm and welcoming, featuring personalised touches and children's photographs on display. However, some signage detracts from the overall homely feel. In addition, staff do not always get the balance right between encouraging children's independence and maintaining clean bedrooms. The issues with the cleanliness

of bedrooms were addressed during the inspection. Furthermore, bedroom door alarms are not reviewed so as to ensure that they continue to be appropriate.

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

Children say they feel safe in the home and can speak to staff if they are worried or upset. As part of care planning, the manager makes sure staff have the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs. For example, training to support children who harm themselves in times of crisis is provided. This is a good safety net for the children.

Staff know how to keep children safe and are supported in doing so by clear and detailed plans. When children go missing, the responses are well coordinated with other safeguarding agencies to support a safe return home. Staff listen to the children to understand the reasons why they leave the home. As a result, incidents of children going missing from care have reduced and children are safer.

Staff work with children to help them understand how to be safe. These conversations are informed by research. Children are increasingly safe, and they are better able to communicate and manage their feelings.

Children know how to raise concerns. The manager responds seriously to allegations. Information is shared with the appropriate professionals to avoid delay and protect children from harm. Staff informed a child about the outcome of an allegation, but this was not recorded, and therefore, it is not known whether the child knew the outcome before the staff member returned to work. This may have led to the child feeling uncomfortable, leading to reluctance to make future allegations.

Physical intervention has been used on three occasions and staff are generally skilled in de-escalating situations. Following one incident, the manager identified that a staff member did not follow the child's plan, which led to the child being held. This enabled learning to improve staff practice.

Safeguarding incidents are rare and generally well managed. However, on one occasion, the staff's response to a child who hurt themselves was not sufficient. Although plans were followed, staff were not creative in their approach to preventing a second incident from occurring in quick succession.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a confident and organised leader. Children like the manager and speak about her with genuine fondness. The manager is an active presence in the home. She has high aspirations for the children and is committed to supporting their progress.

The manager is supported by a dedicated deputy manager and staff team. Staff say their training is good and report that regular supervision provides opportunities for reflection. The staff feel valued and well supported by their manager and enjoy working at the

home. One staff member said, 'I love it here; I really love the young people.' Children are cared for by a team of staff who are knowledgeable and committed to helping children progress.

The staff team is stable, with no vacancies and good retention since the last inspection. There was a temporary period of high agency use to meet the specific needs of the home for a period of time. The presence of a consistent core team meant there was no negative impact on the children during this time.

Management oversight is mostly effective, with monitoring systems identifying and driving continuous improvement. However, the home's independent visitor does not consistently speak with the children. This shortfall has not been identified by the management team. This impacts on children's ability to share their wishes, feelings and views with someone who is independent of the home. Leaders gave assurance that they will address this.

Managers and staff maintain positive relationships with children's family members. Feedback from professionals and family members is positive, and particular strengths are noted as communication and children's progress.

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure-</p> <p>that staff-</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(vi))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff are able to support children effectively in times of crisis.</p>	22 May 2026
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children’s home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that the independent visitor regularly speaks to children during their visits.</p>	22 May 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is a nurturing environment that meets the needs of the children. The home should maintain cleaner bedrooms and maintain a homely rather than institutional environment, specifically in relation to fire safety signs and regularly reviewing the need for bedroom door alarms. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that when children make allegations, they are informed of the outcome before the member of staff concerned returns to work. This is to help with any reconciliation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 4.3)

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: 2644474

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Gracebridge Care

Registered provider address: Arden Lodge, 946 Warwick Road, Acocks Green, Birmingham B27 6QG

Responsible individual: Richard Perry

Registered manager: Georgia Cooper

Inspectors

Emma Hutton, Social Care Inspector
Louise Naylor, 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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