

2728327

Registered provider: Gracebridge Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager is suitably experienced and registered with Ofsted in March 2025.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 September 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/12/2024	Full	Good
05/02/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved into the home and three have moved out. At the time of this inspection, two children were living at the home. Both children spoke with the inspector.

Children benefit from thoughtful and well-planned introductions to the home. The manager carefully assesses each child's needs and potential risks to ensure that individual needs can be met. Staff visit children prior to their move and provide information about the home, the staff team and the other children living there. They also share videos showcasing the home's location and interior. One child's social worker commented, 'I was so impressed with the manager's transition plan into the home; this has really helped [Name of child].' This child-centred approach helps to prepare children for the move, reduce anxieties and promote a sense of security and inclusion.

Children are well supported when they move out of the home. The manager advocates tirelessly on their behalf, working closely with external professionals to secure homes that are better suited to each child's emerging needs. This proactive approach reflects strong partnership working. An external professional commented, 'Staff did their best. This is a team that worked really hard and exhausted all the support they could. This is a credit to the team.' These actions demonstrate a clear commitment to addressing complex needs effectively and minimising potential harm.

Staff support children's health needs through careful planning and effective communication with external professionals. They ensure that children attend routine health appointments and, where necessary, access specialist support, including referrals for counselling. This multi-agency approach ensures that children's holistic needs are met.

Children receive strong support with their education. One child has completed their GCSEs, is now attending college, and has shared their aspiration to become a beautician. Another child has recently begun home tutoring and is receiving dedicated support from staff. The manager works closely with external professionals to identify the most suitable educational provision tailored to each child's individual needs. One child expressed that one of the things they love about living in the home is, 'It's great for learning.' Children are motivated to succeed in their education and feel empowered to pursue their aspirations with confidence and determination.

Children engage in a variety of activities that enrich their social experiences, including Muay Thai, football and golf. One child enjoyed a holiday to the beach, while another had the opportunity to travel abroad. Excitedly, they commented, 'This was my first time abroad; I loved it.' These experiences help children to develop confidence and create positive memories. They also promote social interaction, physical well-being and a sense of achievement.

Children spend time with their families and other people who are important to them. Staff support children to contribute to decisions about these arrangements and actively seek their views. This helps children remain connected to those who are significant in their lives. One parent commented, 'Contact has been amazing, and the staff have been amazing.'

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

Children form strong, trusting relationships with staff, supported by the home's embedded therapeutic approach. One child said, 'I just love it, love it here, staff are lovely and very understanding; it's a big family.' Another child said, 'Staff are really nice and really good, I want to stay here.' One social worker commented, '[Name of child] has thanked me for finding him this home, which is beautiful, he is so happy.' Children feel safe in the home and have confidence in the staff who care for them.

Allegations and complaints are managed effectively. The manager takes prompt action, ensuring that information is shared swiftly with external professionals to avoid delay and to safeguard children from harm. Children are informed of any outcomes. These actions help children feel confident in raising concerns and contribute to their sense of safety.

Staff respond promptly when children go missing from the home. They follow missing-from-home protocols, actively search for the children, and work closely with the local police until the children are found. On return, children are welcomed warmly and with care. Staff provide emotional support and a safe space, helping them feel valued and reassured. They engage children in nurturing, non-judgemental conversations about the risks and dangers of going missing, focusing on helping them understand how to stay safe.

Staff use a nurturing approach when children hurt themselves. They seek medical advice when required and provide appropriate first aid. Through supportive conversations, staff help children to understand their thoughts and emotions. Where necessary, children are referred to specialist health professionals, and strategies are implemented to reduce the likelihood of further incidents.

Health and safety procedures, including fire safety arrangements, are in place. Children take part in regular fire drills and understand what to do in the event of an evacuation. This ensures that children live in an environment where high standards of care are maintained and where they feel prepared in the event of an emergency.

Physical intervention is only used as a last resort once all de-escalation techniques have been exhausted. However, on two occasions, staff and children were not spoken to within the required regulatory timescales following the use of physical intervention. Although this had no detrimental impact, the delay was not in line with expected standards, as it hindered timely reflection, emotional support, and learning from the incident.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, there has been a change in the day-to-day management of the home. The new manager is dedicated, aspirational and effective. He sets high expectations for the children and ensures that staff are well equipped with the knowledge they need to provide high-quality, nurturing care. He has introduced research-informed practices to ensure that each child's individual needs are clearly understood and effectively met. His leadership demonstrates a strong commitment to both the children's well-being and development, as well as the continuous improvement of the home. One professional commented, 'The team saw beyond the surface with [Name of child].'

Staff report that they enjoy working in the home. They support one another and feel well supported by the leadership team. There is a positive atmosphere within the home, and this culture promotes healthy working relationships.

Supervision sessions are held monthly, and the manager ensures that staff performance is appraised annually. These practices help to ensure that staff feel well supported in their roles and in their ongoing professional development.

Staff participate in reflective team meetings, creating additional learning opportunities to enhance their practice. The home's clinical lead contributes to these meetings, supporting staff in adopting a therapeutic approach to better understand and respond to children's emotional needs. These meetings also include discussions about what works well and areas for improvement. This promotes continuous professional development and equips staff with the tools they need to provide the highest standard of care.

Overall, the manager's monitoring systems are effective. However, the review of the quality of care report was not submitted to the regulator within the required timescale. The manager has given assurances that processes will be implemented immediately to address this shortfall.

Two children have not had access to an independent advocate to advise them and ensure they receive the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. As a result, there is a risk that children may not fully understand their rights or have access to the entitlements and support available to them.

Partnership working with external agencies and parents is positive. Professionals have commended the manager and staff for their effective communication and the quality of care provided to children. One social worker said, 'They meet his needs so well, I could not ask for anymore.' A parent commented, 'I cannot fault this home or the staff. [Name of child] is so much happier, and I could not be happier.'

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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed.</p> <p>(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that they submit their quality of children's review to the regulator within the required time frame.</p>	3 November 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children have access to appropriate advocacy support and have an independent advocate to advise them and ensure that they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.16)
- The registered person should ensure that all children and staff involved in a physical intervention are spoken to within the specified time frame. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2728327

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: Michael Murphy

Inspector

Jas Nahar, 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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