

# SC428599

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have mental health disorders, including learning disabilities.

**Inspection dates:** 21 to 22 November 2017

**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:** 23 January 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people are helped by highly skilled and experienced staff to recognise and manage their behaviour.
- Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff, which helps them to share their difficulties.
- Staff work effectively as a multi-disciplinary team to promote young people's mental health.

- Young people feel as safe as possible because staff are always available to them.
- Young people are all making good progress from their starting points.
- The number of missing episodes is low. Staff work effectively with the police to make sure young people are at risk of harm for the shortest time possible.
- The registered manager leads by example. She is passionate about promoting young people's views, while ensuring that they are safeguarded effectively.
- The registered manager considers carefully whether new young people will be compatible with the existing group of young people, and how staff can meet their needs. She develops comprehensive transition plans which successfully support young people's admission to the home.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Ensure that effective monitoring and review systems are in place which demonstrate young people's progress.
- Ensure that safer recruitment practice is extended to agency staff.
- Ensure that when staff restrain young people the registered manager reviews and evaluates this, and debriefs staff and young people.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/06/2016	Full	Good
11/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/08/2015	Full	Good

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons 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>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must ensure the use of monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))</p>	22/12/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so, has spoken to the user about the measure and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. The registered person must ensure that within five days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(c))</p>	22/12/2017
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (Regulation 32(1)). In particular, ensure that information held about agency staff in the home reflects safer recruitment practice.</p>	22/12/2017

### Recommendations

- All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from receiving highly individualised care and support. Specialist help is available to meet young people's needs in the home, through a clinical psychologist and well-trained and experienced staff. Outside of the home, staff have developed close working relationships with local mental health providers. Staff are very effective at working as part of a multi-disciplinary team, and invest considerable time and effort in developing those relationships to benefit young people. A child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) therapist said:

'Everything with the young person's care is carefully considered. There is very good communication and we are involved in care planning and risk assessment development.'

Risk assessments and behaviour management plans are comprehensive in outlining how staff can most effectively support young people, including the management of their self-injurious behaviours. Young people really value how staff support them. One young person said, 'Staff help with wound care', and another said 'The staff are always awake.' Young people repeatedly expressed how helpful they found staff's continual physical and emotional availability, with one young person commenting: 'When I fall apart they are always there to pick up the pieces.'

All young people are making progress from their starting points. Most young people join the home from a secure hospital setting, and staff support them to make progress in all areas of their development. For some young people their progress is significant. For example, one young person has progressed from completely disengaging from education to attending and engaging full time. Another achieved excellent GCSE results, with staff continuing to maintain her school placement in another city so that she did not have to change schools at such a crucial time. Teachers value staff's commitment to education. One said:

'Staff have built up a good understanding with our teaching staff over the past few years and this has resulted in good outcomes for the young people concerned. By good outcomes I do not necessarily mean great GCSE results, although one pupil obtained seven good GCSE passes. This was outstanding for the young person concerned, whose mental health was extremely fragile.'

Other young people make progress in their social interaction and engagement, and are able to make and share meals with others. Young people make eye contact and engage in social communication, following many months of being unable to positively engage with others. Social workers recognise that young people are progressing within their own current ability. One said: 'My young person has made progress; it is going to be a slow journey.' Young people attend and engage well with CAMHS and the in-house clinical psychologist. This supports young people to manage their self-injurious behaviours, and their self-confidence and emotional resilience grow.

Staff promote young people's identity. They encourage them to engage in contact with their families and friends when this is safe and in their best interests. Staff support young people to understand their own sexual identity and religious beliefs. Staff take young people to the gym, to the cinema and to visit beauty therapists. During the summer they went away to Disneyland Paris on holiday. This offered young people new experiences, as well as being great fun.

The registered manager carefully considers the placement of new young people in the home. She makes good use of impact risk assessments, and is highly skilled at developing comprehensive transition plans which support young people's successful admission to the home, including those with the most complex needs.

Staff regularly obtain young people's views through young people's meetings, individual sessions and day-to-day interactions. They ensure that young people are able to access an advocate. Young people feel that staff are always available for them, and this improves their emotional resilience. One young person said: 'Staff are always there when I need them.'

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

Staff are highly skilled at identifying and responding to young people's risk-taking behaviour, especially self-injurious behaviours. They support young people to become increasingly safe, wherever possible. Professionals work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team around each young person, ensuring that they receive consistent care from home staff, education providers and therapists. This helps young people to feel safe, and to talk about what is difficult. One young person said: 'I feel more than safe. It's not a usual safe. I feel safe from everything.' Young people understand how to complain, but this has not been necessary since the last inspection.

Young people go missing infrequently. Staff's response to young people who go missing is excellent. They always follow young people and try and persuade them to return. They try and keep in contact with young people, and also contact family and friends. Staff keep looking for young people while they contact the police. They have developed positive relationships with the local police so that there are strategies in place which ensure that young people are missing and at risk of harm for the minimum amount of time. Staff understand issues such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, and are vigilant for signs of these. The local police officer commented:

'They always share information when young people are admitted about their risks. This meant with one young person we could always pinpoint where she was each time she went missing. The staff's safeguarding is very good.'

Staff are highly skilled in managing young people's behaviour, especially when they are in crisis. Staff help young people to manage their own behaviour and to feel safe. One young person said:

'My home is amazing and I love the staff that support me. I'm lucky to have a placement like this. I feel safe because I am surrounded by loads of people and all of the rules.'

Staff use de-escalation techniques to good effect so that physical intervention is rarely used. The registered manager does not record her review of incidents of physical intervention, or provide debriefs to staff and young people. This represents lost opportunities for evaluation of incidents and improvements to practice.

In order to ensure young people's safety, staff sensitively carry out room searches when necessary. They respect young people's right to privacy and need for nurturing care.

Staff understand how to manage allegations and safeguarding incidents. The registered manager investigates these promptly, which ensures that both young people and staff are safeguarded. Staff inform Ofsted when there are significant incidents in the home so that the regulator has oversight of patterns and trends.

The recruitment of permanent staff follows safer recruitment practice, which prevents unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm young people. This is not the case for agency staff. As agency staff have worked in the home infrequently, the impact of this shortfall is minimised.

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

The registered manager is suitably experienced and qualified. She has been in post for nearly three years. She is passionate about promoting young people's best interests, and has high expectations for them regardless of their starting points. She is confident and leads by example, creating an environment of positivity. She ensures that the home is suitably staffed and resourced, which creates a homely and inviting atmosphere.

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of young people's progress; however, she is not making effective use of monitoring and review systems to demonstrate how she reviews and improves outcomes for young people. She has not ensured that all essential local authority documentation is available in the home, such as care plans. However, staff's detailed understanding of young people's plans minimises the impact of this shortfall. The registered manager regularly obtains feedback from young people, families and professional stakeholders which validates her child-centred approach to young people's care. The transition plans, which she puts in place, are exceptional in supporting complex young people's admission to the home from secure environments. A social worker said:

'The registered manager always tries to meet the wishes of the young people. However, she makes sure she always considers their safety and ultimately safeguards them. She strives and achieves at making decisions which are in the best interests for children.'

The registered manager is robust in her challenges to placing authorities and

professional stakeholders when their performance does not meet her expectations to promote young people's care plans. Staff work collaboratively to ensure consistency for young people, and the core staff team is stable and experienced in this specialist area. They report that the leadership team supports them well through regular formal and informal supervision, and appropriate training. The emotional impact of the work is recognised, and clinical supervision is available with the home's clinical psychologist.

Case records reflect young people's daily lives and their involvement in their own risk assessments and plans. Staff do set targets and review these regularly; however, the corresponding documents are not regularly updated and do not evidence the significant progress that young people are making. The registered manager is aware of this issue, and is in the process of introducing an electronic recording system which will assist with this recording process.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** SC428599

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

**Registered provider:** Courtyard Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** Optima House, 100 Manchester Road, Denton, Manchester M34 3PR

**Responsible individual:** Colin Gallimore

**Registered manager:** Elaine Evans

## Inspector

Rebecca Quested, social care inspector



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