

SC428599

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and run. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children with complex needs that include mental health difficulties, learning disabilities and behaviours that require intense supervision and support.

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and has been registered to manage the home since 2015.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 October 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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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: 21 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2017	Full	Good
23/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/06/2016	Full	Good
11/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))	31/10/2018
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (Regulation 32 (1)) In particular, that any gaps in employment are accounted for prior to the candidate commencing work.	31/10/2018

Recommendations

- The importance of understanding who we are and where we come from is recognised in good social work practice, for example through undertaking life story work or other direct work. Staff in children's homes should play a full role in work of this kind. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)

With particular reference to utilising genograms and family trees in promoting contact.

- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

In particular, that care plans should be individually focused on each child and be presented in a child-friendly way.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people make significant progress from their starting points. This is testament to the hard work and dedication that staff bring to their roles. Young people's highly

complex and challenging needs are met by staff who nurture each young person's emotional health.

Over time, young people make notable and continuous progress that substantially reduces their likelihood of requiring specialist detention to ensure their safety. All young people identify the positive difference that living at this home has made to their lives. One young person said: 'Since being here, I actually want to live, which I thought would never happen. Hope is something they have given me.'

Young people benefit from the thoughtful and highly individualised care that they receive. They feel unique and valued. This in turn provides an environment that builds trust and one in which young people thrive. A social worker, commenting on the progress that a young person had made, said: 'They have nurtured her and allowed her to be the person she can become.'

As young people grow in confidence, they develop ambition and aspirations that previously were absent from their lives. Their talents, interests and strengths are celebrated and fully encouraged.

All young people are in full-time, community-based education and are making excellent progress from their starting points. In addition, they engage in fun activities that offer positive and healthy experiences. Another social worker, commenting upon this aspect of a young person's progress, said: 'There has been a total transformation.'

Young people are fully prepared for their transition into the home. A great deal of care is given to ensure that young people are given the best introduction possible. One young person said: 'I felt like I had lived here forever when I moved in.'

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

Young people do not engage in drug or alcohol misuse and they are not at risk of child sexual exploitation. There has been only one incident of a young person going missing from home since the last inspection and this was of a short duration. Staff acted appropriately to ensure the young person's safe return.

The manager and staff understand extremely well young people's emotional and psychological vulnerabilities. Staff are continuously vigilant, and their responses to incidents of self-injurious behaviour are informed by therapeutic approaches and guidance from specialist services such as the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). As a result, this behaviour has declined both in frequency and in duration for all young people, and for some there have been significant decreases.

Young people feel listened to and cared about and their feelings are understood by their carers. Staff are highly sensitive and responsive to young people's non-verbal means of communicating. For example, one young person said: 'You can try and pretend, but they see straight through it. It's like having a load being taken off you.' A social worker said: 'There has been a significant improvement in her mental and emotional health.'

Young people have a strong sense of safety that is underpinned by the emotional and psychological support that they receive. Staff are calm and confident in their responses to young people and this is in part research-informed and multi-disciplinary in its approach. For example, regular risk management meetings take place that closely monitor young people's progress. There is well-established liaison with CAMHS, and both the manager and staff are open to sharing practice and learning from other agencies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced and has been registered to manage the home since 2015. She leads by example and provides clear leadership to a highly dedicated staff team.

Under her leadership, young people are offered care that enables them to grow in confidence, to become emotionally resilient and to develop future ambitions. The manager has excellent insight into young people's starting points, backgrounds, current progress and future plans.

Staff are fully supported by the manager through both formal and informal supervision. The manager is readily available to offer advice to the team and sets high standards for staff to work within.

The manager guides staff practice to ensure that young people receive care that anticipates their emotional needs, rather than being solely reactive. This planning ensures that staff are fully prepared and that young people receive the best possible support in times of crisis.

The manager has met the requirements and recommendations that were made at the previous inspection. As a result, formal managerial monitoring of care has improved. However, some documents are very long and consider aspects of care that are not always relevant to the young people. Consequently, they are not child-focused. In addition, work with young people does not always consider exploring family trees or using tools such as genograms to explore contact issues.

Complaints are rare, but those that have been made have been investigated in a timely manner and have been documented. However, no formal outcomes have been recorded to ensure transparency and closure to the matters.

Recruitment of staff is, on the whole, safe and ensures that young people are not exposed to adults who may pose a risk to their safety and welfare. However, on one occasion, minor gaps in employment history were not accounted for prior to the member of staff commencing work.

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

Pauline Yates: social care inspector

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