

# SC062309

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for six children who may have physical and/or learning disabilities. The registration is for one child under a short-break arrangement, and for five to live at the home. The home is part of a private organisation.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2013.

**Inspection dates:** 16 to 17 October 2018

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
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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	outstanding
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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:** 29 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
29/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
29/06/2016	Full	Outstanding
15/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

### Recommendations

- All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. ('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: outstanding

Children who live at and visit this home have highly complex medical needs and some have life-limiting conditions. Staff ensure that children are given every possible opportunity to experience fun and life-enriching activities. This includes days out to farms, hydro-pools, dance classes and sea-life centres.

Although the medical needs of children are a priority for staff, this does not overshadow or limit the emotional nurturing that children receive. Staff are fully attuned and sensitive to non-verbal means of communication and they work extremely hard at understanding children's feelings and preferences.

Children benefit from the dedication that staff bring to their role and, as a result, they learn new skills and become emotionally content. The children living at this home were repeatedly described by parents and professionals as being 'happy'.

Children learn new ways of communicating, such as the use of 'switch' devices to enable them to express their choices. Staff also use 'objects of reference' with children to let them know what is happening next. For example, staff use a small fan to simulate breeze indicating that the children will be going out for a walk.

Highly predictable and consistent routines, delivered in an empathetic way, ensure that children feel secure. For some children new to the home, this has resulted in a significant decrease in the level and duration of distress that they communicated prior to living at the home. This has been replaced by laughter and smiles.

Children benefit from a stimulating and homely environment. Their achievements and cultural heritage are fully celebrated and promoted. A particular strength of this home is that staff are ambitious for children. This has included children attending nursery, using standing frames in order to promote the ability to walk, and social activities to establish friends.

The care of children is in part informed by research. This approach is further enhanced by staff working extremely well with community-based specialist services such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and medical staff. This close collaboration with other professionals ensures that children receive high levels of holistic care.

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

The safety of children is a priority for the managers and staff. Well-developed systems are in place to ensure that medication and medical procedures are administered safely, by trained and confident staff. A healthcare professional visits the home several times a week and, as a result, systems are regularly reviewed and staff have timely and regular access to advice and support.

Staff use continuous observation and a range of monitoring tools to track any changes in children's responses and health needs. This ensures that appropriate, prompt medical assessment and/or treatment is sought as soon as possible.

Transition planning is comprehensive, thoughtful and child centred. There is close collaboration between staff, families and existing care providers. This provides an almost seamless transition for children joining the home and minimises any disruption or feelings of insecurity that may be experienced.

For some children with life-limiting conditions, maintaining their health is paramount. Healthcare professionals consider staff to be conscientious in applying the advice that they are given. One healthcare professional explained that progress for some children must also be seen as avoiding medical interventions that would have been highly likely, given the complexities of some children's conditions. For example, she said: '[child's] hips remain aligned and therefore they don't need surgery.'

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

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She has been registered to manage the home since September 2013. She gives strong leadership to a team of skilled and highly dedicated staff. There are well-developed managerial systems in place that monitor the quality of children's care and children living in this home make exceptional progress.

Staff receive high levels of advice and support from managers, healthcare professionals and one another. Complementing and underpinning this is access to a wide range of training and learning experiences. Staff confidence and competence in applying their learning to caring tasks is well evidenced and regularly revisited by managers and healthcare professionals.

Managers promote and role-model extremely child-focused practice. Staff take appropriate responsibility for ensuring that celebratory events take place. For example, staff have formed various planning groups which are responsible for Halloween, Christmas and 'name days'.

The recommendation made at the previous inspection has been met. As a result, there is a greater gender balance on the team and the manager is committed to improving this further.

There are positive and well-established relationships with children's families and professionals. All spoke highly of the manager and staff team, describing them as 'knowledgeable', 'caring', 'impressive' and being 'the best home I deal with'. One parent

commented: 'Everything has been excellent. If I could have an ideal, this would be it. They are extremely caring and compassionate.'

Some of the children's local authority plans are not the current version, the plans are out of date and are not fully reflective of the care that children receive.

## **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:** SC062309

**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:** Gemma Ferris

## Inspector

Pauline Yates, social care inspector

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