

1231404

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This private home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who may have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 January 2020

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: 8 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/11/2018	Full	Good
25/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/08/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children stay in a welcoming and supportive home where they are fully valued and respected. A strong feature of the home is the warm and affectionate relationships between staff and children. A child said, 'I am happy now that I have a home. I love it. I am very happy here. The staff are fantastic.'

Children are making good progress at this home. Parents and social work professionals are exceptionally positive about the service provided and the staff's overall commitment to children. Comments included: 'They go the extra mile'; 'It is a fantastic service and the staff are very knowledgeable'; and, 'I am so glad that my child goes here. I could not wish for a better place.'

Staff are particularly skilled in observing and understanding the complex needs and vulnerabilities of children and ensuring that they receive a high quality of personalised care. They understand the full range of children's individual needs, including how they communicate and the support that is needed to encourage them to reach their full potential. For example, a child who was fully reliant on a ventilator has progressed to having 15 minutes off her ventilator at a time. This means that she can be more independent and do some things for herself.

Children's well-being is at the centre of the home's practice. Support plans are comprehensive and are consistent with the local authority's care plans. Staff spoken with during the inspection demonstrated an in-depth knowledge of children's plans. This ensures that good-quality care is provided, in accordance with individual needs. Staff also continue to consult on a regular basis with families and placing social workers to gain a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the children's complex needs.

Children use a wide range of methods to communicate, and make good use of sensory toys, music, sign language and pictures to make purposeful choices. As a result, children are fully included in their care by choosing meals, activities and items for their rooms, and can share their anxieties or their joy.

Children have access to a wide range of opportunities to explore the world, build their confidence and increase their social skills. They have participated in a variety of leisure and community activities, including trips out to local beaches and parks, and going swimming. The children planned and enjoyed a Christmas party. These experiences, captured in photographs, are included in the children's memory books and scrap books, and are proudly displayed around the home.

Staff have a good understanding of children's specific health needs. They work in partnership with a range of healthcare professionals, and with the children's families when the children are staying on a short-term basis. This ensures that staff are up to date and fully conversant with children's current health needs. Children are well supported to access healthcare services that may be required because of an illness or accident. Immediate action is taken by staff to ensure that emerging health needs are consistently met. The children each have a medical passport that clearly informs

healthcare professionals about their health needs and how they wish to be cared for. Since the last inspection, robust procedures have been put in place to check each staff member's competence in giving medication or using medical equipment. This is refreshed annually. There is now a named senior member of staff who is responsible for administering medication at the beginning of each shift. A registered nurse attends the home three times a week. She oversees all medication, medication records and medical equipment, and provides bespoke medical training for the staff team. As a result, medicine errors have decreased in number.

Staff fully support all children to attend school. Key staff have forged excellent links with all of the schools involved. The children have excellent attendance and staff help them with their homework. Several children are progressing beyond initial expectations. For example, one child has been moved up a year in school because of her progress, another child can now sit unaided, which means that he is now more independent, and another child is performing above his expected performance levels. Further to this, staff encourage the children to read, and read to them at bedtime.

The home is exceptionally well maintained, attractive, homely and safe, and is a stimulating place where children can maximise their potential. It provides an environment of high quality, which clearly conveys to children that they are valued and deserve the best. The premises are well designed and fully equipped to meet the children's full range of mobility needs, and include a large garden and outdoor space where children can play and have fun in a secure environment. A sensory room helps the children to relax and enhances their sensory needs. Children's bedrooms are well designed and furnished, which promotes the children's privacy and independence.

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

Parents and professionals confirmed that they have every confidence in the home's ability to keep children safe at this home. Staff are well supported and receive effective and specific training to enable them to meet the needs of the children. For example, all staff receive bespoke training around specific health conditions and in safeguarding vulnerable children.

Staff fully understand the children's needs and are confident in their ability to deliver good personalised care. High staffing ratios ensure close support, supervision and monitoring of children. Children's strengths, vulnerabilities and triggers are highlighted within detailed plans and risk assessments which are followed in practice. However, risk assessment information is recorded within two separate documents, including risk assessment records and health plans. This makes it difficult to locate the information. However, these plans are understood by the staff, who implement them in their daily practice, ensuring that children's holistic needs are met.

Staff manage children's complex and challenging behaviour well. They are consistent in their responses to negative behaviour and have been successful in their efforts to help children manage their frustrations and anxieties. Staff have a very good understanding of the triggers and factors that contribute to children becoming upset. Staff have worked closely with schools and parents to develop consistent and well-thought-out behaviour

management strategies. These strategies are fully implemented in practice, and have proved effective in reducing children's distress. A social worker said, 'Since being here, he [child] has not displayed the behaviours that were of a concern. I believe that this is because the staff are consistent with him, that they are calm in their approach and that they give him opportunities to be independent.'

The manager and staff demonstrate a thorough understanding of the risks to individual children's safety, including the risks associated with their disability and the children's levels of understanding and communication. Staff are well trained in a range of safeguarding topics. Therefore, they can recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect, and are aware of the children's vulnerability to exploitation and the risks that accessing social media may present. Staff take suitable action when they have concerns about children's welfare, reporting all concerns in a safe and timely manner to all relevant safeguarding professionals. This ensures that children are kept safe.

Children are protected from hazards by a wide range of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and checks. Staff carry out regular health and safety checks, including fire drills, to ensure that the premises are safe and children know what to do in case of an emergency. There are suitable systems in place to ensure that visitors to the home are suitably checked and supervised to protect children. All staff have been appropriately checked and vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager provides strong leadership. She is appropriately qualified and experienced, and has been registered with Ofsted since 2019. An experienced and committed deputy manager supports her in her management role. All the staff working at the home are trained to the minimum professional level or are in the process of working towards this.

The registered manager is an enthusiastic and committed leader who places the welfare and safety of children at the heart of her practice. The home is managed consistently, and is successful in meeting the aims and objectives highlighted in the statement of purpose. Staff practice is rooted in the belief that children have the right to be treated as individuals. The staff are skilled at implementing this ethos and place children at the centre of all that they do.

Over the last year, there have been several changes in the staff team. The manager has introduced a staffing structure that incorporates having a senior member of staff, a team leader and two residential care workers on each shift. As a result, new staff are fully supported by the experienced staff. This also means that the senior staff take responsibility for delegating and overseeing daily tasks.

Regular team meetings provide time for staff to discuss research-informed practice, so that the home continues to review and develop the service it provides for children. An example includes having the opportunity to look at exploitation of vulnerable children and adults. The local community police officer attended this meeting to discuss issues in the area and general concerns. The manager incorporated this information into her safer

area report which further protects children.

There is clear oversight of practice and, where necessary, any staff performance issues are addressed. The manager acts as a positive role model for staff and supports them to explore different strategies for engaging children and strengthening relationships. Staff regularly receive supervision that develops their professional practice effectively. They confirmed that they are well supported in their practice and receive clear direction and guidance. There are good opportunities for staff to develop their knowledge and skills through training. They also learn more specialist skills, such as administering oxygen, safe use of ventilators and suction equipment, and medication training, to be able to meet children's more specific needs. This ensures that children are cared for by competent staff who have the right skills and knowledge.

Internal and external quality assurance systems are further improving children's progress and safety, as well as sustaining a good standard of care within the home. Children's care and progress are tracked through good monthly monitoring by an independent visitor. In addition to this, the manager proactively seeks the views of the children, their parents, professionals and other stakeholders, which informs her own regular service monitoring and development plans. Therefore, the manager has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and she is committed to implementing the changes required to improve progress and experiences for children.

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: 1231404

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Siskin Drive, Middlemarch Business Park, Coventry
CV3 4FJ

Responsible individual: Gary Thompson

Registered manager: Sarah Lonergan

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, regulatory social care inspector

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