

SC062309

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care for up to six children who may have physical and learning disabilities, including one place provided for short-break services.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2014.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 November 2021

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: 13 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
16/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
29/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from warm and nurturing care provided by a committed team. Children's individual needs are well understood by staff. Staff are provided with detailed guidance to enable them to provide child-centred care. This is important due to the complexity of each child's health needs. Staff have developed positive relationships with children and spend time understanding how children are feeling.

Staff are very well supported by the in-house nurse. The team receives training to enable its members to meet the children's individual health needs effectively. Staff competency to meet each child's health needs is routinely assessed. Children benefit from the specialist knowledge and experience the in-house nurse brings to their role.

A particular strength of home is the collaborative relationships developed with children's schools. Children were well supported to continue to engage with their learning during restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, with staff working well with teachers from one school, who came to the home to teach three children for an extended period. Professionals shared positive feedback on the effective support that staff provide to children in school.

Professionals supporting the children commented on the positive progress children continue to make due to the care staff provide. Parents shared very positive feedback with the inspector regarding how well staff supported them to spend time with children, particularly during lockdown periods. The purchase of a garden office enabled children to enjoy quality time with their family. This included staff helping children to celebrate important cultural and religious traditions with their families.

Staff understanding of children's non-verbal communication is good. However, the specific approaches to communication for one child were not recorded. This makes it difficult for staff to understand the child's progress in developing communication skills.

The guide explaining to children what they can expect while living in the home is well written and child-centred. However, the information provided is not accessible to the children living in the home.

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

Staff have a sound understanding of the potential safeguarding risks to children in the context of their known vulnerabilities. Staff receive appropriate training which equips staff to be confident in understanding their role in safeguarding children. Children's health is particularly well safeguarded due to the specific measures that staff ensure are put in place to protect them from the risks associated with COVID-

19. This included staff wearing full personal protective equipment when this was necessary to safely care for children.

Children's individual plans provide staff with clear guidance on how to deliver safe care to children. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of the recording of the care delivered by staff to children during the night. Although no specific risks have been identified as a result, this does not support staff to maintain a consistent overview of the care provided to each child.

The quality of recording has been identified as a practice issue for one staff member. There was an internal investigation under way during the inspection following appropriate advice being sought from the designated officer. This was in response to information shared by an external professional regarding the quality of care provided to two children. It is not possible to evaluate the response to these concerns due to the ongoing investigation. However, response to the management of allegations has been effective for another staff member, where this resulted in disciplinary action.

There has been a significant number of new staff recruited to join the team since the last inspection. The job description for one staff member, recruited to a non-care role, includes responsibilities above and beyond their role. Although they are currently working within their role, there is a lack of clarity around expectations. This is concerning, as expectations include supporting staff in providing care.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed and child-centred. They demonstrate a real understanding of all the children and their individual needs. The registered manager has undertaken direct work to ensure continuity of care. This is important, given the level of potential risk to children's health. The registered manager acts as a strong advocate for the children. She is confident to challenge professionals while working collaboratively with them.

The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the home. With half of the staff joining the team since the last inspection, there has been a keen focus on supporting staff induction and training. However, the registered manager has not been able to undertake their continued professional development, in particular a reassessment of some competencies.

Staff value the support provided by the registered manager and senior leadership team. They appreciate the good development opportunities provided within the team. The registered manager has provided consistent support for staff during a difficult period, including throughout the pandemic.

Supervision is provided to staff on a regular basis. However, there is inconsistency in the quality of recording of the discussions, including matters relating to safeguarding practice.

The registered manager's monitoring of the quality of care provided is not appropriately recorded. It is therefore not possible to assess the effectiveness of the registered manager's oversight of the quality of care.

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, 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 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>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f)(h))</p>	<p>31 January 2022</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(b))</p>	<p>31 January 2022</p>

<p>In particular, staff in non-caring roles should be provided with job descriptions that reflect their specific role and level of responsibility commensurate with their role.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p>	<p>31 January 2022</p>

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that the children’s guide is provided in a format accessible to all children. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 24, paragraph 4.21)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have 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: SC062309

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Gary Thompson

Registered manager: Gemma Ferris

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, Social Care Inspector

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