

1231404

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 run and provides care for up to five children who may have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection, five children were living in the home.

The home was previously registered to support short breaks, so one bedroom was shared between two children who used it at different times. One of these children is now supported in her family home with an extensive care package, and the other child has moved into the home full time. The registration of the home was amended on 16 May 2023.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2019.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 10 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/01/2023	Full	Good
11/01/2022	Full	Outstanding
07/01/2020	Full	Good
08/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children who live at this home have complex health needs. They receive highly personalised care that is tailored to meet their individual needs. As a result, children are making good progress from their starting points. One child said, 'This is the best home I have ever lived in. The staff have helped me to understand my thoughts – I have progressed in so many ways.'

The home is exceptionally well maintained, with a wide variety of toys and play equipment available to children. Bedrooms are thoughtfully designed to meet each child's specific needs, including bespoke beds to minimise the need for staff to move children unnecessarily. As a result, the home provides a nurturing and safe environment.

Staff frequently monitor and review children's individual goals. This ensures that staff support children to make progress and keep children's goals under regular review. Staff celebrate children's progress and achievements with their parents and other professionals. A member of staff said, 'This approach supports children to practise their skills in various settings and supports their self-esteem and independence.'

All children attend school regularly. Staff accompany one child to school. This provides the child with consistency of care while school staff learn how to meet their healthcare needs.

Staff treat children with dignity and respect. They engage in open communication, explaining current and future activities to the children. Furthermore, staff empower children by involving them in making choices about their daily care, giving them more control over their lives. This practice also needs to be embedded by encouraging children to contribute when reviewing care plans to reflect their voices.

The children are thriving under the care of dedicated staff. An independent reviewing officer said, '[Child's name] consistently appears happy during visits, with his needs well attended to. The staff's commitment to keeping him content, comforted, and involved in his support plan is evident and commendable.'

Staff help children to spend time with people who are important to them. The manager advocates for children and supports increased time spent with loved ones. This ensures that children maintain important relationships.

There is proactive planning and attention paid to supporting children who are preparing to move on. The manager has ensured that children have advocates to support them in this area. This means that children have a voice, and their views are at the forefront of moving-on plans and decision-making.

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

Careful planning and high levels of supervision and support ensure that disability is not a barrier to children's participation in community activities. For example, children attend youth clubs and enjoy trips to the zoo, accessible bike riding and museums.

All children have comprehensive health support plans. These plans give staff detailed and clear instructions on how to meet children's complex healthcare needs consistently and safely. In addition, staff receive in-depth, bespoke training on each child's needs. Staff do not complete tasks related to children's healthcare until they have demonstrated their competence. Staff competency is regularly assessed to ensure their practice remains safe.

Children's different methods of communication are understood by staff. Children have communication passports. The staff know the children well and are attuned to their individual communication styles. Some of the children are non-verbal and have limited motor skills. Staff are attuned to their facial cues and use these to enable the children to make choices in their daily life.

Staff work collaboratively with other professionals and with family members to understand children's complex needs. Managers and staff are strong advocates for children. Staff communicate well with relevant professionals to provide an all-round approach to children's care.

Staff make children's complex healthcare needs a top priority, ensuring that children attend their medical appointments. This commitment results in notable improvements in the children's health. The presence of the home's practice nurse and the effective partnerships with other healthcare professionals greatly benefit the children. External professionals have praised their collaboration with the manager and staff, highlighting its positive impact.

Staff are trained in safeguarding. Managers discuss with staff their understanding of safeguarding in supervision sessions and team meetings. This promotes an effective safeguarding approach. Staff understand safeguarding procedures and their responsibilities in keeping children safe.

Safeguarding concerns are acted on in a timely manner. The manager is thorough and transparent in her investigations and shares information with relevant professionals. The manager ensures that action is taken to address any concerning staff practice. This ensures that children are safeguarded.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and qualified. She is highly motivated and enthusiastic. She has good support from a deputy manager. Both are child-focused and knowledgeable about the specific needs of the children.

The children are cared for by a passionate and committed team. There has been staffing instability during the last year. Leaders and managers have recognised the challenges that this has brought and have worked hard to train and develop a number of new staff members. This has resulted in a more stable staff team and an improvement in the delivery of consistent care for the children.

A system is in place to monitor practice improvements. Staff's individual performance is reviewed in reflective supervision sessions, and the group discussions in team meetings ensure consistent care. The manager addresses any performance concerns and offers staff additional support and training for skill enhancement and professional growth.

The manager provides a regular quality of care review and conducts appraisals with staff on an annual basis. Staff reflect on their work and set targets for the year ahead. However, the appraisals and reviews of care do not include the views of children, their parents or key individuals. This limits the manager's understanding of children's experiences and the ability of leaders to make improvements.

Staff morale is high. Staff say that they are well supported by their manager. The manager ensures that staff feel valued and she encourages them to develop their skills through additional learning. As a result, staff are skilled and knowledgeable. Staff told the inspector that they receive training that helps them to meet children's individual needs.

The manager shares information with other important people in the children's lives. An education professional said, 'The manager is great – she stays in touch and always contacts us to share good news, and when she needs to share concerns. I couldn't ask for anything more.'

Managers follow up and escalate concerns if responses from agencies are not satisfactory. This helps to ensure that children receive the right support and their needs are met.

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, The 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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children (“a quality of care review”) at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it;</p> <p>and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(b)(c))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that the views of children, social workers and other stakeholders are considered in the review of the quality of care.</p>	<p>30 October 2023</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that appraisals for staff include the views of other professionals who have worked with staff over the year, and the views of children. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff encourage children to access their case records and contribute to them to reflect their voices. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 58, paragraph 11.19)

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: 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: Deborah Hurley

Registered manager: Sarah Lonergan

Inspector

Jennifer Quest, Social Care Inspector

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