

1278806

Registered provider: Coventry City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties. There is suitably qualified, registered manager in post.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 March 2022

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: 15 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/01/2020	Full	Good
12/02/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are currently four children living at this home. The manager and staff build trusting relationships with the children. The children know that they are part of a family and are thriving in the care of the staff. Photos of the children's special events and activities are included in their memory books. These personal keepsakes ensure that children can understand their life story in later life.

Children are making effective progress in their education. From one child's starting point, staff have supported her to attend education. She has recently completed a course which provides her with practical skills to help her in young adulthood. Staff contribute towards her achieving independence skills by teaching her how to budget and use public transport. Another child has made significant progress at school. He enjoys a range of weekly activities which boost his confidence and self-esteem. He recently received a reward for passing his exams and commented, 'I'm proud of myself.'

Staff encourage children's interests. For example, staff promote the musical talents of one child. They make sure that he has a range of musical instruments available in his home so that he can practise his skills, which promotes his mental well-being.

The manager and staff help children to celebrate their achievements. They write cards to the children, thanking them for their contribution to the home. Staff encourage the children to get involved in their local community. One child takes part in charity events to raise money and she helps other children by representing their views in a local authority forum. These experiences boost children's self-confidence and extend their social experiences.

The manager uses the children's views to improve practice in the home. Children know how to make a complaint. Staff discuss the outcomes of complaints with the children so that they know their concerns have been listened to and taken seriously. However, these conversations are not always fully recorded in the home's documents, which hinders the manager's oversight.

Staff are respectful and promote the cultural and religious identities of the children. They offer the children a variety of food and arrange visits to churches and shops to enable them to connect with their different faiths.

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

Staff help children to develop strategies to manage their behaviour. For example, they have purchased a foot spa, various lavender sprays and products to help to soothe children when they feel distressed. These strategies have been effective in reducing aggressive outbursts. In addition, staff encourage children to participate in

a wide variety of activities, which helps to improve their mood and confidence. This has resulted in a reduction of incidents involving the children.

Staff treat children with dignity and respect. They pursue restorative practice with the children to help them take responsibility for their actions. As children progress, staff review their strategies. For example, door alarms were quickly removed as the children became more settled and responded well to boundaries and routines in their home.

Staff know what to do if they are worried about a child. The manager and staff help to protect the children from harm. Staff have a well-coordinated approach to risk assessments. They work closely with other agencies, including the police, to address any identified risks to the children's welfare.

Staff carry out focused work with children to help them to understand risk and how to do things differently to make themselves safer. Children are now much more responsive to advice from staff. As a result, they are not going out late, have not gone missing recently and are making more positive choices, such as reducing their drug misuse.

Physical intervention is used only when necessary and as a last resort. However, records of physical interventions do not always contain sufficient detail to help the manager to evaluate how a child is held by staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is highly experienced and wants the best outcomes for the children. She challenges other agencies to make sure that decisions are made in children's best interests and that their needs are met effectively.

The manager makes sure that the children's care plans are up to date and relevant to meet the children's needs. The manager recognises that the plans are written in a format to help the staff and are not written in a child-friendly manner. This shortfall means that children may not fully understand their plans and how they can work towards their goals.

The manager supports the staff and encourages them to develop their careers. They receive regular supervision and effective training to help them to support the children in their care. However, some supervision records require more detail to provide a sufficient record of the discussion.

The manager has a stable staff team, which means that children receive care from staff who know them well. However, at times, relief staff have covered some shifts. To ensure that children receive consistent care, relief workers attend team meetings and have regular supervision to ensure that all staff are familiar with the children's needs. However, team meeting minutes do not always capture what has been agreed in sufficient detail, for example by including a time frame and clarity around

who is responsible for carrying out a plan of action with the child. This may result in actions not being undertaken.

Leaders and the manager regularly monitor the quality of care provided to the children to make sure that it is making a positive difference. However, they do not always make decisions consistently around the children's well-being. For example, staff lock the doors to the communal rooms at night. There is no clear rationale to justify this within children's safety plans. As a result, children may have unnecessary restrictions imposed on them. In addition, managers have not ensured that all aspects of the home environment are safe for children. The inspector found that one child keeps hazardous cleaning products in their room.

While the staff provide a good standard of care to the children, the home requires some improvement. Some of the children's rooms require redecorating and there is a commercial sanitary bin in one child's bathroom. As a result, the home does not provide a homely or nurturing environment for children.

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
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii)) This specifically relates to replacing the carpet in a child's bedroom and removing the grey sanitary bin from another child's bedroom.	8 April 2022
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) This relates to removing cleaning products from a child's bedroom.	25 April 2022
The registered person must ensure that—	25 April 2022

the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children have access to the communal areas and that the locks are removed on the doors leading to the communal areas.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that records of restraint are kept which enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should ensure that learning from incidents is shared with all staff to improve practice, particularly in relation to the outcomes of children's complaints. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- The registered person should ensure that a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions is kept and ensure that both the person providing supervision and the staff member have a copy of the record. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.4)

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: 1278806

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry, CV1 5RR

Responsible individual: Angela Whitrick

Registered manager: Denise Flude

Inspectors

Justine Hosking, Social Care Inspector
Angela Weston, Social Care Inspector

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