

2483718

Registered provider: Ar Curam Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There were five children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2021.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 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: 14 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
19/01/2022	Full	Good
23/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children live in a warm, welcoming family atmosphere. They have their own personalised bedrooms, and communal areas where they can socialise. The kitchen is the hub of the home, where they gather to eat and discuss their day. There is a high standard of decoration, and the children have ample outdoor space.

Children's health needs are met, and staff ensure that children attend regular health appointments. Staff find creative solutions to help children to engage with health professionals. This includes using videos to show children the skills that they need to help them to care for themselves.

Children have a voice in their home. Staff listen to children's views and make them feel heard. Children know who to speak to if they want to raise a complaint or if they need support. Staff speak up for, and with, children to give strength to the child's voice.

Staff create an atmosphere of tolerance and acceptance. Children are supported to understand and accept their peers. This allows children to express themselves freely and feel safe in their home.

Children attend education at both school and college. One child is completing an apprenticeship, and another is undertaking their GCSE exams. Staff work with education professionals to address any difficulties. This means that children feel ready and able to learn.

Children who are approaching adulthood are supported to learn the essential skills they will need to look after themselves. This includes learning to cook, manage a budget and do their shopping. This helps to prepare children for moving on from the home and gives them confidence in their ability to manage aspects of their own care.

Children spend time with family and friends. Staff support appropriate arrangements to ensure that children keep in touch with people who are important to them. Where there may be risks associated with family members, staff will supervise those visits. This helps to ensure that children remain safe while maintaining those family bonds.

There are some restrictions in place that prevent children from accessing some areas of the home, and treats and snacks are locked away. A recommendation was made at the previous inspection in relation to this as it is not in keeping with the home's ethos. This recommendation will be repeated.

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

Staff identify each child's individual risks, and what needs to happen to make each of them safer. Staff have daily conversations about the risks and needs of each child, and they plan ways to support them. This helps to ensure that staff respond consistently to the children when they are at risk.

When children are missing from home, staff follow their individual missing-from-home protocols. Children enjoy good relationships with staff, who create a home that children want to be in. This has reduced the number of times that children have been missing from home.

Staff use positive rewards and consequences to support children to make better choices. Children are helped to understand the impact of their actions through making amends. Staff model positive responses, such as apologising to children if they make a mistake. However, the manager does not always review the consequences to ensure that those used are effective.

Bedroom searches take place when there are concerns about a child's welfare. Children understand the reasons why these take place and are informed, or are present. This ensures that children participate in decisions about their personal space.

Closed-circuit television is used to monitor the outside of the building for security reasons. Alarms are fitted to the children's bedroom door to monitor when children are entering or leaving their rooms. There is no updated assessment to demonstrate why this is necessary to safeguard children.

Children can be held by staff when they are feeling angry or upset. The recording of these holds is well documented and there is management oversight of the safe hold entries. Staff debriefs take place in order to learn from a review of practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A permanent, suitably experienced, and qualified registered manager manages the home. The manager and staff team have high expectations for the children, and each of them has good standards of individualised care. Staff regularly reflect on and discuss each child's care to ensure that children's needs are met. Leaders and managers regularly monitor and review children's plans, which means that any emerging need is responded to promptly.

Staff have spoken positively about leaders and managers. The manager cares about the staff's emotional well-being, and staff have commented about feeling well supported both personally and professionally. Staff benefit from regular supervision and participate in team meetings. This allows the team a forum to discuss any issues, reflect on practice, and share their views.

When there are concerns about staff practice, these are dealt with quickly. Investigations are thorough, consider the evidence, and ensure that the protection of children is their primary focus. The actions taken following an investigation are robust. There are clear plans to address concerns and improve practice.

Leaders and managers have ensured that there is a positive relationship between staff, other agencies and the important family and friends of each child. This means that children are cared for and supported by people who have the information they need to make sure that children's needs are met. However, the manager has not obtained one child's most-up-to-date local authority care plan. This could mean that the home is not working to the most-recently agreed goals for the child.

The staff team is vetted and has undergone a robust recruitment process. Most staff are either qualified or have been enrolled on the required qualification. However, for two members of staff, the relevant date has passed for them to have achieved this qualification.

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 Registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline, or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes; the effectiveness of any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation (35) (3)(a)(vii))	31 January 2024
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(d))	31 January 2024
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))	31 January 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all staff in a care role, including external agency and bank staff, have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children. They will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. In particular, the registered person should ensure that food is not locked away from the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 2483718

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ar Curam Limited

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Richard House, Sorbonne Close,
Thornaby, Stockton-on-Tees TS17 6DA

Responsible individual: Zak McIlhargey

Registered manager: Michael Saunders

Inspectors

Lisa Gordon, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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