

2507724

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 who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager holds a level 5 leadership and management qualification and has been registered with Ofsted since March 2019.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 August 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: 11 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/05/2022	Full	Good
26/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/10/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in all aspects of their lives. They benefit from individualised care. This is provided by a nurturing team of staff who want the best for children.

Since the last inspection, one child has successfully returned to live with their family. Another child moved into the home in an unplanned manner but has settled well. The registered manager ensures that staff are appropriately prepared to support children who move in and out of the home.

Children are supported to attend and engage in education. One child has passed their exams and secured an apprenticeship. Two children have struggled in their educational settings. The registered manager and staff have actively worked with professionals to ensure that appropriate alternative provision is put in place. This has enabled the children to continue accessing education. Further to this, children's aspirations and future ambitions are understood and encouraged. For one child, this is to go to college to study animal care, and for another child, it is to qualify as a plumber. This means children are supported to achieve their potential.

Children are in good health. They are registered with local health services and attend routine appointments.

Staff encourage children to become more independent according to their abilities and future plans. For example, children learn to cook, maintain employment and manage their finances. Staff work closely with professionals so children can access bespoke support. One child is already benefiting from this. The child's social worker told the inspector that the child has made a lot of progress around employment, independence skills and education.

Children have formed positive relationships with some staff. They enjoy trusting relationships with them. However, several staff members leaving is unsettling for children, and two children told the inspector how they struggle with staff changes.

Staff encourage children to share their views and feelings. This influences the care and support the children are offered. For example, children enjoy taking part in a variety of activities that they choose. These include horse riding, volunteering and boxing. This encourages children to maintain positive relationships, have fun and create memories. One child is vice chair for the corporate parenting board. They help to inform and shape services for children in care across the city.

Staff support children to explore their identity, including their culture and gender. One child has participated in a specialist project around their cultural heritage. This good

support helps children to be proud of who they are and to respect and celebrate difference.

Children see family and friends in line with their plans. Two children do not wish to spend time with family members. Staff support children to understand the importance of these relationships, where appropriate and safe to do so.

Children enjoy a large and spacious home with bedrooms they have personalised. However, some of the home's decor is tired and would benefit from being updated. One child's bedroom carpet needs replacing. The registered manager has a plan to address this, and they have started to improve the appearance of the home already.

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

Staff support children to remain safe and well. Children's evolving needs and risks are well recorded. They are understood by staff and reviewed regularly. The registered manager takes a proactive approach to managing allegations. These are dealt with appropriately while children continue to be supported.

Children have individual and up-to-date risk management plans. These set out clearly what staff should do to manage and reduce harm for children, and staff follow these plans. For one child, this has reduced their inappropriate social media and internet use. Another child's use of cannabis has reduced. This helps to reduce harm to children so they can remain safe.

Staff support children's behaviours well. They reinforce positive behaviour through key relationships, rewards, praise and important conversations. This means incidents requiring physical intervention of children have been low. When staff have intervened, this has been appropriate. The registered manager has reviewed these incidents. This good practice contributes to children and staff feeling safe and supported.

When children go missing from home, staff follow children's individualised plans. They conduct local searches and work closely with the wider professional network to help children return home safely. Return-home conversations take place, and children are supported to understand risks. Records capture actions taken by staff and decisions made by the registered manager. These are regularly reviewed. For example, one child has had a high number of missing-from-home episodes. They now enjoy less restrictive safety planning. This is in line with their wishes, future plans for independence and increased knowledge about staying safe.

Recruitment processes are rigorous. Staff who are recruited to work in the home are subject to all necessary checks. This helps to make sure that children receive care from safe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced and knowledgeable registered manager. The manager's role has evolved. They have taken on additional responsibilities and spend less time at the home. To date, this has not impacted on management oversight or the care and safety of the children in the home. This is due to the manager being supported by two visible deputy managers and by regular communication, which is underpinned by a culture of support and commitment. This is led by the responsible individual and valued by the managers. Together, they share a clear vision for the home.

Record-keeping and management oversight have improved since the last inspection. Leaders and managers have introduced some effective monitoring and quality assurance processes. This has been underpinned by regular supervision and team meetings. Staff told the inspector that they feel supported by managers. One area to develop is the monitoring of staff through the required qualification to avoid any further delays in staff completing this within timescale.

Managers work effectively with the wider professional network. One professional told the inspector that the team has an excellent multi-agency approach. For example, an exploitation worker is attached to the home. This worker visits regularly to offer children advice and guidance around a range of topics. This includes sexual health and community safety, as well as contextual safeguarding. This helps staff to keep children safe and well.

Staff retention has caused a sense of instability for children. Several experienced and qualified staff have left the home, while new staff have joined. This instability has had an impact on the children and their sense of security. One child told the inspector, 'I try not to build relationships with new staff because once I do, they end up leaving.' Managers and leaders recognise this. They have put in place working patterns so that experienced workers support those less experienced. Managers and leaders also have ongoing plans to improve staff recruitment and retention.

Staff have access to a wide range of training opportunities. This includes specialist training based around children's individual needs. Most of the staff team members are not qualified. However, they do have experience of working with children in residential care. Managers have enrolled staff on the required qualification to enhance their skills and experience. However, one member of staff will not obtain this qualification within the required time frame.

Leaders and managers understand and act on children's identified needs. For example, working patterns are being changed in recognition that children would benefit from this.

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 may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or 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). The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(b) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	9 October 2023

Specifically, ensure that managers monitor staff's progress through the level 3 diploma or equivalent, so that staff complete this in the time frame set out in regulation. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e))	9 October 2023

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: 2507724

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: Timothy Green

Inspector

Nurul Kabir, Social Care Inspector

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