

2507724

Registered provider: Coventry City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this home. It is registered to provide care for up to four children and young people who have social and emotional needs.

The home was registered by Ofsted on 15 March 2019. The registered manager is completing a level 5 award in the leadership and management of residential childcare.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 October 2019

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: This is the home's first inspection

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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 health and well-being standard is that– the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c))	21/12/2019
The protection of children standard is that the registered person must ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i)) This is with specific reference to assessing risks relating to online safety.	21/12/2019

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

This refers specifically to the safe storage of food.

- Any home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home in accordance with regulation 24. Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. The use of CCTV is regulated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Conduct (Home Office 2013). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality

standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)

- Records of restraint must be kept and should 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 it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Registered persons have a key role in seeking to develop the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons which may include services, individuals (including parents), agencies, organisations and establishments that work with children in the local community, e.g. police, schools, health and youth offending teams (regulation 5 – engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met). These working relationships will also be key to success in delivering the care planning standard (regulation 14). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)

This refers specifically building links with the neighbourhood policing team.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since this home was registered in March 2019, three children and young people have lived at the home. Children and young people have benefited from planned and tailored introductions to the home, including being able to choose items to personalise their bedroom. One child has moved on from the home, and was able to visit his new home with a parent and staff prior to moving. Staff attention to ensuring positive beginnings and endings helps children and young people to feel involved and to gain a sense of security during a time of change.

Staff prioritise helping children and young people with their learning. For example, a clear daily routine helped one child to attend school on a daily basis after a long period of intermittent attendance. With the encouragement of staff, one young person has started a car body repair course at a local college.

Children and young people are supported by staff to attend routine health appointments to help them to maintain good health. One young person is encouraged to make appointments with his general practitioner and to self-administer his medication. This is helping him to develop essential skills as he moves towards adulthood. However, despite having resources available to them, staff have not used these to support a young person to explore the risks of smoking and substance misuse to his health. This lack of creativity leaves children and young people without essential support to help them to make positive lifestyle choices.

Children and young people are encouraged to keep up their hobbies and try new experiences in their leisure time. Consequently, one child is extremely proud to have become a member of a local rugby club. Another has secured a Saturday job, which has boosted his confidence. Children and young people have also enjoyed day trips and holidays. Being involved in a variety of leisure pursuits helps children and young people to build new skills and increases their self-esteem.

Children and young people are encouraged to share their opinions about their care, and this feedback is taken seriously by staff. For example, one young person disliked the language used in some of his records. This resulted in staff amending the records to be more child focused, in keeping with his views.

The home is clean, tidy and well maintained. However, staff are not diligent in ensuring that good food hygiene practice is always maintained. For example, it was unclear when a packet of raw chicken had been opened. A lack of attention to the safe storage of food could pose a risk to the health of the children and young people.

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

Staff have benefited from a comprehensive induction to working at the home. They receive training to raise their awareness of the signs that a child or young person may be

at risk of exploitation and to help them to understand how to report safeguarding concerns. This helps to increase the safety of children and young people.

When young people go missing from the home, staff respond promptly and in keeping with agreed plans and protocols. Independent return-home interviews are routinely undertaken and used to inform young people's plans. For one young person, the positive relationships with supportive staff have helped him to reduce the frequency with which he goes missing from care.

Children and young people have individualised risk management plans that are regularly updated. However, risks assessments do not include a full assessment of the risk posed to children and young people through their use of the internet. In addition, staff are slow to assess any online risks posed to children and young people when they come to live at the home. Consequently, it is unclear if risk reduction measures are needed in relation to the use of personal mobile phones or gaming equipment. This leaves staff without essential information about risk and potentially leaves children and young people vulnerable to harm.

Staff encourage children and young people to behave well through praise and rewards. The use of a restorative approach by staff helps children and young people to put right any harm or damage that they cause when their behaviour is challenging. For one child, staff worked hard to ensure that their response to his complex behaviour did not initiate or inflame his behaviour. Reflective practice after incidents helped staff to adjust their practice and reduced the need for physical intervention. However, on occasion, the records of physical intervention lack attention to detail. For example, on one record it was unclear how long the physical intervention had lasted for and when the child had been released from the hold. Incomplete recording may reduce the manager's ability to identify good practice or where practice needs development.

The registered manager has established communication with the local authority designated officer and has referred one concern appropriately. This enables safeguarding partners to review information and advise managers appropriately about what next steps need to be taken.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A stable and reflective staff team provides children and young people with child-focused and personalised care.

Staff have plans for their professional development and are positive about the support that they have from managers through supervision. The registered manager and deputy manager have a realistic vision for the development of the service. They have plans for practice to be informed by social pedagogy, with some initial training scheduled to start before the end of the year.

Professionals, including social workers and teachers, are pleased with the care provided to children and young people and say that communication with staff is good. When the

registered manager has been concerned that partners are not providing the resources that a child or young person needs, this has been appropriately escalated.

The registered manager did make some contact with the police as part of planning for the registration of the home. However, since the home has been operational he has not established a relationship with the local policing team. This is a missed opportunity to forge a positive relationship with a key partner.

Children's bedroom doors are fitted with alarms that can be activated to help staff to monitor if children need assistance at night. However, the registered manager has not ensured that there is a clear policy on the use of these alarms. Consequently, it is unclear how the use of this method of surveillance is individually risk assessed for each child. This has led to the alarms being left on unnecessarily throughout the day.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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

Alison Cooper, social care inspector

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