

2529331

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home cares for up to five children. The home's statement of purpose says that it provides care for children with learning disabilities, including children with autism spectrum disorder and other associated diagnoses.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2022.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 May 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 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/10/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have made good progress in all areas of their lives. In particular, children are developing independence skills. Children who found it difficult to sit at the dinner table now lay the table and sit down for dinner.

Staff have strong relationships with children, who enjoy the company of staff. Staff can dedicate quality time to the children due to high staffing levels. The home is filled with toys and activities for children to play with staff. Children freely access the home and are well accompanied by staff.

Care planning is strong. Leaders carefully consider the needs of the children already living in the home when introducing a new child to the home. Children's moves in are well planned, and care plans are detailed and consider the child's needs. As a result, staff know the children well and how to care for them.

Children attend school regularly. They are making good progress with their education. Staff work closely with the school staff and meet with them regularly.

Staff help the children to spend quality time with their families. This takes place in the home and the community. Staff understand the children's and families' cultures and celebrate these with them. Staff help parents to celebrate religious festivals with their children and cook cultural food as part of this.

Staff seek the children's views in an effective and structured way. Children can express their views on decorating their rooms, activities and food. However, staff do not always use the children's preferred communication aids to support verbal communication. This was a recommendation made at a previous inspection.

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

Staff promote positive behaviour and use creative ways to initiate conversations with children to explore their feelings. Staff use a comic strip with one child to help them express their thoughts and emotions. Children have clear plans in place for staff to follow. Physical intervention is rarely used, and when it is used, the manager reviews this promptly and debriefs staff and children.

Staff understand the risks to children. Staff recognise the children's specific vulnerabilities related to their age and disabilities. Staff complete detailed risk assessments to understand these risks. Risk assessments are regularly updated.

Children's health is improving. Staff prepare children for medical appointments using photos and communication aids. This has helped children to attend these appointments successfully. Staff have used activities to help children understand dental hygiene. Children are developing skills with their personal hygiene and care.

Leaders investigate concerns about staff practice. They involve the local authority designated officer and follow the advice provided.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a permanent and qualified registered manager in place. Staff report that the manager is approachable and will dedicate time to staff to help develop their skills.

The manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The manager involves staff in the completion of the quality of care review and the development of the home. There is a development plan in place to improve the quality of care provided to children.

The manager is committed to learning from incidents. This learning has helped staff to develop their skills. The manager uses reviews to identify areas of improvement with recording and practice. The manager provides feedback to staff from observations of staff practice. These learning opportunities are improving the quality of care for children.

Staff are well supported to carry out their roles. Staff receive regular training that covers the specific needs of the children. Since the last inspection, staff have been trained to use communication aids with the children. Staff feel listened to through regular supervision and team meetings. However, staff have not had an annual performance review.

Social care professionals report good relationships with staff and the manager. Communication with professionals is generally reported as effective. There have been two occasions where there has not been communication following an incident involving children. This has not impacted on the care of the children.

The independent person visits the home monthly. They do not always consult with the children, staff and other key people related to the care of the children. This was addressed by the manager during the inspection.

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
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 personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)) In particular, when staff communicate with children, they should use communication aids identified in the children's plans.	2 June 2023
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (a)(d))	2 June 2023

In particular, share information promptly with the local authority about the care of the children, including about incidents and accidents involving children.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the independent person makes a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. The independent person should meet with children, staff and other key professionals to gain their views. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 2529331

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 4, Northbrook Industrial Estate, Hollybrook Road, Shirley, Southampton, Hampshire SO16 6PB

Responsible individual: Luencina Zankl

Registered manager: Samuel Stokes

Inspector

Mark Dawkins, Social Care Inspector

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