

2529331

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to five children. The home's statement of purpose states that it provides care for children with learning disabilities, including children with autism spectrum disorder and other associated diagnoses. Four children live at the home, all of whom were present during the inspection.

A manager has been in post since April 2022 and has submitted his application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 27 October 2022

Date of last inspection: 10 May 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Committed staff work hard to maximise and enrich the children's experiences at this home. Staff practice is enhanced by the presence of a visible and hands-on management team. The children enjoy trusted and secure relationships with the staff.

Staff offer the children choices and encourage them to communicate their views, wishes and feelings. There is a good range of communication symbols, schedules and social stories available for the children.

Children have individual communication plans. However, these do not fully correspond with the communication plans that the children use at school nor are they informed by up-to-date speech and language input. This has the potential to hinder the progress that some of the children are making with their language development.

Staff have not received specific training on the communication programmes that some of the children use at school. As a result, the staff's knowledge is limited in this area, which has an impact on their ability to fully meet the children's speech and language needs. The responsible individual booked this training during the inspection.

The safety of children

Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping children safe. Children's risk assessments are up to date and identify relevant risks individualised to the children. This includes how risks outside of the home are managed.

Staff ensure that when there is a possibility that a child may go missing or run off from an activity in the community, risk assessments include clear guidance on how to minimise this risk. As a result, the staff are well prepared to manage unsafe situations effectively.

Behaviour management strategies are positive and child focused. Physical intervention is infrequently used. Behaviour management records show that the staff use proportionate actions to keep the children and others safe. However, staff debriefs are not consistently undertaken in the required time frames. Consequently, the staff may not feel supported at the time that these incidents occur. This requirement is partially restated.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager has submitted his application to register with Ofsted and is awaiting the outcome from his fit person interview.

Leaders and the manager have made good progress towards addressing the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. Measures taken by staff to monitor children's internet access have improved. This ensures that children are safeguarded online in an age-appropriate manner..

The manager has developed and strengthened the home's internal monitoring and review systems to help to ensure that there are continuous improvements to the quality of care provided. The newly implemented monthly audit sets out clear actions for the staff to take to ensure that the children's relevant plans are followed.

External monitoring has changed since the last inspection. There is a new independent person, who is providing a good balance of impartial support and challenge. This additional layer of scrutiny has contributed to the home's improvement.

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

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— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(b)(i)(ii)) This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, specifically in relation to the children's communication programmes that they use at school. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff practice takes account of the health objectives, including communication needs, as specified in the children's education, health and care plans. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.6)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2529331

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Assure Care Homes Limited

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

Responsible individual: Luencina Zankl

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Anne-Marie Davies, Social Care Inspector

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