

2529639

Registered provider: Coventry City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have experienced early childhood instability that has led to trauma and/or associated complex behaviours.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2021.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 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: 25 July 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
25/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/09/2021	Full	Good
06/02/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff work well together to provide children with consistent care. They demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the children's individual support needs. Staff use a range of communication methods to support children, including illustrated short stories that describe social situations. This enables children to make positive progress in all areas of their lives.

Children are well supported to move in and out of the home in line with their plans. Since the last inspection, one child has been sensitively welcomed into the home. One child successfully returned to live with their family. Another child moved to live in a family environment with their foster carers. These transitions have been well planned and celebrated by staff. One child maintains a positive relationship with staff since leaving the home.

Staff arrange weekly and monthly meetings for children to share their views about the care and support they receive. Children get involved in many aspects of the day-to-day running of the home, such as food shopping, identifying positive activities and supporting with recruitment of new staff. This helps children to feel valued and to take ownership of their home.

Staff prioritise children's education. One child has completed mock exams. Another child does not wish to continue with their college course. They have been supported to explore other options, including apprenticeships. This means that children can achieve their personal goals and aspirations for the future.

Children are encouraged to become more independent in line with their individual plan. They learn to manage their finances, buy and prepare their own meals and maintain their bedrooms. One child struggles to engage in formal work around independence. Therefore, staff deliver this in a variety of creative and informal ways. The child has also managed to access specialist support around independent living. Good support builds children's confidence and prepares them for their transition into adulthood.

Children's health is monitored well by staff. When children struggle to attend routine health appointments, staff explore this with them. Children can share their anxieties and learn helpful strategies. As a result, children are encouraged to live healthy and active lives to support good physical and emotional health.

Staff understand and promote children's identities. Children spend time with people who are important to them. They also learn about their cultural heritage and faith. One child attends their place of worship with staff. Family members feel that staff keep them involved in their children's care.

The house is spacious and well maintained. It has a homely feel with photos of children engaging in activities on display in some of the rooms. Children have

opportunities to personalise their bedrooms, which helps them to feel comfortable in their home.

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

Staff keep children safe. There are comprehensive risk management plans, which are updated following any significant events. This supports staff to understand the children's individual risks, vulnerabilities and actions to take to reduce the risk of harm. Following an incident involving hazardous substances, the registered manager acted appropriately. Measures are in place to avoid this in the future.

When children go missing from home, staff act appropriately to support them to return home safely. One parent told the inspector that they are happy staff look for their child and bring them back safely. Staff carry out direct work with children to help them understand risks such as going missing from home. This work has led to two children making safer decisions and going missing from home less often.

Staff have not been required to physically intervene to protect children. Age-appropriate incentives, praise and rewards support children's behaviours. When there is conflict and bullying between children, the staff identify and address this immediately. Children are engaged in mediation and work to understand why such behaviour is not appropriate. As a result, children develop an understanding of acceptable behaviours.

Safer recruitment procedures are in place. The registered manager ensures that all new staff are appropriately vetted before they work with children. These effective measures help to ensure that only safe adults work with children.

The registered manager's response to allegations is good. They follow the organisation's procedures, prioritise children's safety and involve relevant professionals. When necessary, additional action is taken, and training is put in place to help staff to learn and develop their practice. This leads to children's safety being prioritised and staff being appropriately supported.

Since the last inspection, there have been two minor medication errors. Procedures around the administration of medication have been further improved. There has been additional training, staff carry out daily audits and the registered manager carries out weekly audits. This enables the registered manager and staff to be confident that procedures are being followed and the risk of further errors is minimised.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. There have been periods over recent months when the manager has been absent. Two able deputy managers have provided good oversight and leadership during this time. This means that children's care has not been significantly affected.

Managers have a good understanding of the children's needs and the home's many strengths. There is a clear plan in place to address areas of development and to bring about continued improvement in the quality of care provided to children. This is monitored by managers and shared with staff in regular team meetings.

The review of the quality of care has not been completed in a robust or timely manner. This is now being addressed by the registered manager.

A few members of staff have left the home since the last inspection. Managers recognise the impact of this on children's sense of stability. They have ensured that familiar and experienced staff work with the permanent staff while new staff are being recruited. New staff have completed a range of training, including mandatory and additional training. This supports their practice and care of children.

All staff have received an appraisal to help them to reflect on their long-term development. A few staff have not received regular supervision in line with the organisation's policy. This is a missed opportunity for managers to review and monitor staff's welfare and practice. The registered manager has already put improvement plans in place. Despite this, staff told the inspector that they feel well supported by managers and enjoy working at the home.

Professionals speak highly about the home and the support staff provide to children. They say that there is regular communication with the professional network and comment on the commitment of the staff team. Children benefit from this good multi-agency working.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should have a system in place around regulation 45 (review of quality of care) which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulation at least once every six months; also see regulation 13(2)(h) (the leadership and management standard). The registered person should carry out a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided at the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Reviews should be underpinned by the quality standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered person should ensure that prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Records must be kept of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. Regulation 23 requires the registered person to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. These are fundamentally the same sorts of arrangements as a good parent would make but are subject to additional safeguards. Where there are questions or concerns about a child's medication, the registered person should approach an expert such as a general medical practitioner, community pharmacist or looked after children's nurse. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

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: 2529639

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: Ian Sykes

Inspector

Nurul Kabir, Social Care Inspector

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