

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 a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since September 2021.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 July 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 14 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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: requires improvement to be good

Children's progress at the home varies. For example, one child has missed significant periods of school. The staff team has failed to promote informal learning or provide meaningful activities while the child was not attending school. However, the other three children have good attendance at school and are making progress in this area.

Staff do not adequately support children to prepare for independence. One child has an independence plan in place. However, this has not been reviewed or updated. In addition, staff have not completed sufficient direct work with the child to support her to develop her skills. This approach does not prepare children for adult life.

A new child moved into the home in April 2022. Despite this being a planned admission, important paperwork from the placing authority was not obtained quickly enough. This means that staff do not have access to all the information they need to meet the child's needs.

Children's records do not demonstrate the progress children have made. Despite staff implementing incentives for children to encourage them to meet their goals, children's targets are not reviewed regularly or updated. As a result, children may not be making as much progress as they could be.

Children are not encouraged to read or contribute to their care plans. This is a missed opportunity to help children inform how they are cared for.

Children have positive relationships with the staff. They enjoy spending time with the staff and are able to talk to them if they have concerns. In addition, children know how to make a complaint if they are not happy about any aspect of their care.

Staff create a warm and nurturing environment which children respond to positively. Staff have supported children to personalise their bedrooms and there are photos of children across the home. This helps children to feel at home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff are not always following processes put in place to record and dispense medication. A new medication log has been put in place to address this shortfall; however, the twice daily checks of medication do not always take place. As a result, recording and dispensing errors have continued. This places children at risk of not receiving their medication correctly.

Children occasionally go missing from home. The quality of the recording of such incidents varies. It is not always clear from records if staff have taken sufficient

action to bring about the children's safe return. This does not promote children's welfare.

There are times when staff have to physically intervene to keep children safe. On occasion, staff have failed to sufficiently document these interventions and the registered manager's review has not addressed this recording issue. As a result, it is not always clear if the intervention was necessary. This shortfall has the potential to put children at risk.

Staff have regular key-working sessions with children. However, these conversations are not always linked to children's care plans or risks. While this has improved in recent weeks, there are still occasions when staff have not explored with children important issues such as bullying, healthy relationships and risks. This does not support children to learn how to keep themselves safe.

Risk assessments are in place and have been reviewed. However, they are not all up to date or accurate. However, staff know the children well and this has not had an impact.

The registered manager's review of the home's location risk assessment did not include consultations with relevant individuals as part of the process. As a result, there may be risk factors in the local area that have not been considered.

Staff know the children well and, as a result, children are generally settled. Children told the inspector they have everything they need. They feel safe and are comfortable in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The shortfalls identified at this inspection demonstrate that the registered manager does not yet have good oversight of the home. The leadership and management of the home have not been sufficient to drive forward improvements. One of the two requirements raised at the September 2021 inspection has not been met and is reissued. In addition, eight further requirements have been raised following this inspection. The progress noted at the September 2021 inspection has not been sustained.

The registered manager's monitoring of the home is insufficient. For example, his oversight of recording and reporting is poor. He has failed to identify and address poor recording in documentation or gaps in paperwork.

The registered manager has not ensured that a full and accurate record of complaints is maintained. As a result, these records are incomplete and it is not clear if concerns raised by others have been fully explored.

On occasion, there has been a delay in the registered manager notifying Ofsted of incidents. In addition, the registered manager has not ensured that there is a clear

chronology of actions taken following every serious incident. As a result, records do not detail what action has been taken to protect children.

The registered manager was unable to provide the inspector with full and accurate information in relation to Annex A form which is required by the regulator on a full inspection. This shortfall hinders the regulator's oversight of the inspection period.

One member of staff has not attained the diploma in residential childcare within the required time frame. However, staff have access to a variety of training courses that support them to care for the children.

Staff feel supported by the managers and have access to regular team meetings and supervisions. This means that staff have the opportunity to discuss children's needs and strategies to support them. Staff at the home appear motivated and passionate about their roles.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(viii)(x)) The registered person must ensure that children are helped to understand the importance of education and that staff provide children with support and encouragement for informal learning while they are not in formal education.	19 September 2022
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	19 September 2022

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies. (Regulation (12) (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(vi)(vii)) This specifically relates to ensuring that risk assessments are up to date and include effective strategies for staff to follow. This also relates to supporting children to understand and reduce their own risks. In particular, the registered person must ensure that when there are concerns about the safety and welfare of children that effective action is taken. In addition, the registered person must ensure that they act on any shortfalls identified to improve practice. This requirement was issued 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	19 September 2022

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that internal monitoring systems are used effectively.	
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children’s care plans are in place quickly, to provide staff with key information about children. The registered person should obtain key information from the child’s placing authority upon admission to inform care.	19 September 2022
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b) (2)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all physical interventions are necessary and that interventions are clearly documented.	19 September 2022
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23 (1))	19 September 2022

This relates to ensuring that there is a robust process in place for the recording, handling and administration of all medication prescribed for children.	
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. The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual— does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff obtain the relevant qualification within the required time frame.	19 September 2022
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that all complaints are fully documented.	19 September 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	19 September 2022

an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(c)(e))	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) This specifically relates to ensuring that relevant individuals are consulted with when the location of the home is reviewed.	19 September 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children are actively encouraged to read their records. These records should be age appropriate and child-friendly. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6)

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: Coventry City Council

Registered provider address: Coventry City Council, Council House, Earl Street, Coventry CV1 5RR

Responsible individual: Angela Whitrick

Registered manager: Ian Sykes

Inspector

Debbie Holder, Social Care Inspector

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