

2647110

Registered provider: Allesley Childrens Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care for up to three children who may have learning disabilities and other complex health needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2021 and holds a level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 August 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children lived at the home at the time of the inspection. Since the previous inspection, one child has moved into the home. Professionals who work with the children gave positive feedback about how well the child settled in with the support of staff.

Staff have formed strong relationships with children and are committed to improving their experiences. This means each child makes good progress in key areas of their development.

The home is clean and well maintained. Children have toys and play equipment appropriate to their needs and abilities. Children's bedrooms reflect their individual interests, which creates a homely environment where children have fun.

Children enjoy a range of activities and opportunities. For example, a child enjoys trips to the Sea Life centres to explore his love of sharks and children are going on a summer holiday, which is being tailored to their individual needs. A child who is preparing for independence is also being supported to learn to drive.

The children have a mix of communication needs, and staff support them in individual ways to ensure that they can share their views about the care they receive. For example, staff may support children to communicate using pictures or sign language, to help the child's understanding. Children's views are obtained and acted on. However, the children's guide does not meet the children's communication needs and there is no evidence that children have been supported to understand the information contained within it.

Two children regularly attend education provisions. The registered manager works closely with designated staff at the provisions to ensure that these children achieve their potential. A social worker said, 'Communication has been excellent, and I have been impressed with how the manager spent time with [name of the child]'s school and other professionals involved with them to get to know them so they can support them in the home and aid their development.' The registered manager works creatively with the third child to encourage more positive learning experiences appropriate to their needs as the child has now left school and is considering his next steps.

Staff promote children's health and well-being, and they support children to attend health appointments. The registered manager acts as an advocate for children, ensuring that their health needs are met and kept under review. Staff support children to have a healthy diet. They have helped one child to improve their diet significantly, and they no longer require specialist support from a dietician.

Staff support children to keep in touch with their families. This means staff are aware of the importance of helping children to maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

One child is preparing to live independently. The registered manager advocates for the child to ensure that professionals who support him listen to their views and use them to inform decisions about his next steps.

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

Children feel safe at the home. They are comfortable and at ease with staff who support them well. Staff are aware of the risks for each child and support them in a safe way. Some information in children's care records are not up to date. However, this is a recording issue which has not affected the care of the children to date.

Staff use behaviour management strategies to distract children effectively, and no physical interventions have been needed to keep children safe. Staff support children with clear boundaries, which provides them with a sense of security. As a result, children have a sense of respect for each other and share their living space harmoniously.

New staff are safely recruited. This means appropriate checks have been made to help determine that staff are suitable to work safely with children.

Risks are identified, assessed and managed appropriately. One child has a health condition and staff use a device to monitor them in their bedroom. This helps to protect the child and reduces risks to their well-being while they are alone. Although the child's care records reflect how this risk is managed, this use of surveillance is not reflected in the home's statement of purpose.

Staff who administer medicines are suitably trained. Medicine is stored securely. However, there are no temperature records to ensure that medicine is stored at a temperature which means it remains effective. There are no protocols in place for medicine taken 'as required'. This means staff may administer medicine inconsistently. This is particularly important when children have limited verbal skills and find it difficult to communicate to staff when they need medicine.

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

There is a registered manager at the home, who is suitably qualified. There have been significant staffing changes in recent months and six new staff members have been recruited. The registered manager explained that the long-term absence of a deputy manager and the responsibilities of training new staff mean that some of their managerial responsibilities are not up to date. The responsible individual is aware and some tasks, such as the review of children's care records, have been delegated to senior care staff. This means the quality of the children's care continues to be consistent.

The responsible individual acknowledges that there are gaps in oversight of quality assurance procedures. We found some care records and other key documents, such as the home's development plan and statement of purpose, are not fully up to date. There has been a lack of oversight of other areas, including staff training and recruitment and medicine management. The responsible individual is taking immediate steps to increase their oversight, such as spending more time at the home to develop staff.

Staff are positive about the quality of their induction, explaining how it helps them to get to know the children well before they begin supporting them. Some permanent staff have not received all the provider's mandatory training. However, this has not had a negative effect on the standard of care the children receive, and there is a plan in place to ensure that all staff receive this training as soon as possible. Staff share information about how to support the children's needs and mitigate any risks in an effective way, using handover meetings and regular staff meetings.

There is no process in place to check that non-permanent staff employed by agencies have the appropriate training to meet the needs of the children. The registered manager and responsible individual made checks during the inspection to ensure that training was in place. This ensured that staff are appropriately skilled to support children's needs. However, better systems are needed to monitor this more proactively.

Staff feel supported by the management team. They feel listened to and able to make suggestions to improve the quality of the care and support children receive. Most staff receive regular, reflective supervision. However, non-permanent staff who work at the home regularly do not receive supervision. The registered manager told us they themselves receive regular supervision with the responsible individual. However, the supervision records do not reflect this. The responsible individual was honest and acknowledged their shortfall and agreed records would be made of all supervision sessions in future, to support the manager's development.

There are effective working relationships between staff and professionals who support the children. Professionals have provided positive feedback about the quality of the support staff provide to children. A social worker said, 'Staff work well with me and inform me of anything like medical appointments.' They told us staff are 'attentive and adore [Name of child].' They explained that reports they received from staff were detailed and received in a timely way.

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 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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) This relates to the registered person ensuring that all staff receive essential training to meet children's needs. It also relates to the registered person maintaining good oversight, to ensure that there are effective monitoring and review systems in place to improve practice, particularly around the management of records, medicines and staff training.	30 September 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager and non-permanent staff. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- The registered person should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is kept under review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', pages 14 and 15, paragraph 3.5)

- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)

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: 2647110

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Allesley Childrens Care Ltd

Registered provider address: 3 Marlston Walk, Coventry CV5 9LG

Responsible individual: Clare Alele

Registered manager: Emma Quinn

Inspector

Virginia Vickers, Social Care Inspector
Jackie Line, Social Care Inspector

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