

2709438

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three children with learning disabilities, physical disabilities or social and emotional difficulties.

There is an interim manager in post, who has not applied for registration with Ofsted. A new manager has been appointed.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 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: 4 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/07/2023	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the previous full inspection in July 2023, two children have remained living at the home. The interim manager has worked to successfully address the failings identified at the previous inspection. As a result, children are now receiving good-quality care and staff act to keep the children safe.

Children are able to try new things and have fun. Staff provide sensory play, messy play and engage in children's imaginative games. In addition, children are able to experience new things and visit new places such as castle ruins, safari park and going swimming. Children have positive experiences in the home and are able to develop relationships with staff, who they enjoy spending time with.

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs and how to support them to progress. Since the last inspection, the interim manager and staff have reflected on what children have achieved since living at the home and what action is now needed to support their ongoing development. Children now have meaningful targets to support their progress.

Children are in education. Staff work closely with the children's schools to understand their educational needs and support children to access education.

Staff have a good understanding of children's health needs and are strong advocates on children's behalf when they need additional support from health professionals. For example, one child refused to take a particular medication. Staff's persistent communication with medical professionals resulted in the child eventually being prescribed the medication in a form that the child was willing to take.

Staff have helped children to understand aspects of their care plans, through social stories, communication aids and regular key-work sessions. As a result, children have become more confident in communicating what they want, and staff use this to inform how children want to be cared for.

Staff understand the importance of children being able to see and interact with their family. Staff support children to visit family members and, when this is not possible, to see their family over video calls. This approach helps children to continue to have relationships with people who are important to them.

Staff support children to explore and maintain their cultural identity. Staff have developed their understanding of a child's birth country and culture. They have used this knowledge to provide meals from their child's birth country, to access music and to decorate their room to help them feel more at home. Staff have used communications aids and social stories to explore the child's culture with them. This has had a positive impact on their well-being, with the child smiling, giggling and vocalising when their heritage is discussed.

Managers have made the decision to end one child's time living at the home. This is because they are unable to provide the quality of care they aspire to, for the current children, while they live together. This is due to the need to keep both children separate to avoid incidents of violence. The interim manager continues to work with the child's local authority to identify an alternative home more suited to the child's needs. Senior leaders and the interim manager have reflected on the learning from this and have put in place action to improve their admissions procedures going forward.

The home environment is clean and well maintained. Staff have worked hard to help children personalise their rooms. Children have been able to choose how their rooms are decorated and furnished. This has helped children to feel settled and at home.

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

The interim manager has taken action to improve the policies and protocols in place to protect children. In addition, she has ensured that staff understand and fulfil their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children.

There is now a clear protocol in place to follow if a mark or bruise is found on a child. Staff implement this protocol to ensure that all marks and bruises are explored to identify their cause and whether there is a concern. This information is shared with the child's social worker. All unexplained marks are now reviewed by the interim manager, who monitors these incidents to identify any trends and patterns. This process ensures that if there is a possibility that a child has come to harm that this is quickly identified and action is taken to safeguard them.

Staff and the interim manager have taken appropriate action in response to the allegations made by children. Staff have ensured that allegations are escalated to the manager. The manager has referred these allegations to the appropriate agencies and ensured that the necessary investigations take place.

There are now clear procedures in place in relation to blocking children's movements around the home as an alternative to physically restraining children. Children's risk assessment have been updated to reflect the use of environmental restraints. Records show that these have only been used when necessary and proportionate to do so. The interim manager has also improved the oversight of physical intervention practice in the home. Overall, records are now recorded in line with regulation, and where they have not been, this has been addressed by the manager in their review. Children and the staff are provided with opportunities to reflect on the incident and the effectiveness of the intervention used. This information has been used to inform and improve staff practice.

The interim manager and staff now reflect on incidents to try to understand what may cause children to become distressed. Staff use this information to inform children's care in order to avoid circumstances that may cause children to become upset. Staff use social stories to help children to understand expectations in the

home and the impact of their behaviours. This has helped children to understand that certain behaviours are not wanted and has helped them to communicate their needs more positively.

Staff lock external doors to prevent children leaving the home. The manager has now reviewed this practice and updated the children's individual risk assessments to reflect the need for this restriction and monitoring. The interim manager has put in place regular reviews to ensure that this practice is not used unnecessarily.

New medication administration procedures have been implemented. There is now better oversight of the administration of medication and clearer records to show what children have received. As a result, children have received their medication as prescribed. There have been two recording errors since the last inspection. These were quickly rectified and addressed with staff through supervision and team meetings.

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

Since the previous inspection, a skilled and passionate interim manager has led the home. Following the previous inspection, leaders and the interim manager acted quickly to understand the shortfalls that had been identified and to implement an action plan to drive forward improvement. The actions that have been taken by the interim manager and staff have improved the quality of care provided to children. However, a new manager has been appointed, the staff team remains relatively new to the role, and its members are unqualified. In addition, there are further changes happening within the staff team over the next few months. As a result, these improvements are in their infancy and require time to be embedded into practice.

There are a number of vacancies across the staff team. This means that the home currently only has enough staff to care for two children. In addition, there are plans in place to move some of the current staff team to another home within the organisation. This will cause further vacancies in the team and will mean that there will only be enough staff to care for one child. As a result, there is not enough staff to provide care for the three children the home is registered for.

None of the permanent staff members have the qualification to demonstrate that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to work with children in a residential care setting. No members of the staff team hold the required level 3 diploma, and one member of staff is out of the specified timescales to achieve this qualification. Senior leaders and managers are aware of this shortfall and have plans in place to address this.

Staff's recording still requires improvement. Some documents, including incident forms and daily recordings, lack clarity and detail. For example, a daily record for one child did not reflect that an allegation has been made. This does not help children or other professionals to understand children's experiences in the home.

Staff have now undertaken training personalised to the individual needs of the children. This includes training to care for children who have global development delay, communication needs and personal care needs. The interim manager has tested out the staff's knowledge and understanding following the training to ensure that the training has been effective in influencing and improving staff practice. However, the staff are yet to complete training to support children who display self-harming behaviours. This training has been arranged by managers and is due to take place next month.

Managers have used team meetings effectively in order to ensure that staff understand the new processes and procedures implemented since the previous inspection. Staff have now received a supervision session to reflect on and develop their practice. In addition, there are plans in place to ensure that all staff receive annual appraisals. Staff told the inspector that they now feel listened to, that they are supported by the management team and that everyone works together to improve the experiences of the children.

Leaders' and the interim manager's monitoring and oversight have significantly improved since the last inspection. The interim manager carries out regular audits of the quality of care provided to children and reviews all incidents that take place in the home. As a result, the interim manager has an in-depth understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The interim manager has used the findings from her audits and reviews to improve practice within the home. This has had a positive impact on the care children receive and in turn their experiences and progress.

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 the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care to the number of children they are registered for.	14 November 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.14)
- The registered person should ensure that they continue to meet regulations 13(2)(d) and (e) by ensuring that staff are suitably qualified and obtain the required level 3 qualifications in the specified timescales. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.37)

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: 2709438

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Siskin Drive, Middlemarch Business Park,
Coventry CV3 4FJ

Responsible individual: Deborah Hurley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Melissa McMillan, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023