

2794326

Registered provider: Ar Curam Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It provides short- and long-term care for up to 4 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024.

Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 January 2026

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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 22 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by a consistent staff team, who understand their needs well. Relationships are encouraged to develop naturally, and key-workers are assigned based on the children's preference with individual staff members. This approach helps children to develop secure and trusting bonds with the staff.

Good attendance at school has been difficult to achieve for some children. However, staff are strong advocates for the children and work collaboratively with education staff to identify and break down barriers that hinder children from attending their education placements. For some children alternative education provisions have been sought and are working well to ensure children continue to learn.

Similarly, when children do not attend education. Staff arrange for children to take part in independent living skills activities to prepare them for adulthood. These sessions are both fun and engaging and led by the child's interests. For example, cooking, shopping, budgeting and domestic tasks. The sessions occur alongside home tutoring in English and mathematics.

Children are encouraged to bring their friends and family members to the home. Siblings and friends are invited to take part in learning opportunities facilitated by the staff and other agencies. For example, sexual health nurses and substance misuse workers provide educational sessions for the children and their friends. This helps a wider range of children learn about risks they may face as a teenager and teaches them how they can keep themselves safe from harm.

Children have increasing, and age appropriate, autonomy over their care arrangements. Their views are regularly sought and heavily influence how their care is designed and delivered by the staff. Equally, they are encouraged to co-design the home to ensure the communal spaces are used to good effect. For example, recently some of the children have expressed an interest in studying art. The small communal room has been refurnished to provide a space, where children can be creative and progress with their interests. Likewise, the snug is being repurposed into a cinema room. This helps children to feel valued and heard.

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

Children said they do not always get along with each other, and this can sometimes cause them to become upset. Staff are aware that the dynamics in the home have recently changed and, at times, this negatively impacts on children. The staff adopt new strategies to reduce this impact and help children to feel safe and secure in their home.

Staff carefully consider and record risks for each child. They are attuned to children's routines and behaviour and identify when changes occur. The staff help children understand risks outside of the home and teach them how to keep themselves safe. As children's knowledge and understanding of risk outside the home increases, the staff support them to take age-appropriate risks in a planned and safe way.

When children are upset, staff use a therapeutic approach to help children to be calm. They reflect with children about their feelings and emotions and teach children how to safely manage their emotions and feelings. On some occasions, this intervention does not work, and staff must hold children to keep them safe. When holds are used, trained staff carry these out sensitively, protecting children's dignity.

Occasions where children do not return home at their agreed time has significantly decreased. Children said this is because they feel safe in the home and understand that the rules are in place to keep them safe. When children do go missing, the staff look for them and share their concerns with relevant agencies to ensure that children are found and return home safely.

Children's physical and mental health needs are being met. Routine health appointments take place and actions from health assessments are addressed quickly. The staff work with child mental health services to inform assessments and support children to receive therapy. The staff talk to children and discuss the importance of good health, when they are reluctant to attend appointments, and this promotes engagement.

Children said they know how to make a complaint and who they would complain to. However, when children have verbally expressed dissatisfaction about an element of their care or the wider running of the home, this has not been recorded as an informal complaint. As a result, the manager is unable to monitor the impact and effectiveness of staff actions or the views of children. However, staff have responded appropriately to the children's verbal complaints.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and her deputy have good oversight of the home. Their systems enable them to understand children's progress and identify barriers that prevent children from reaching their potential. Auditing systems help the manager to identify practice shortfalls and respond to these in an appropriate time.

Children's care plans and risk assessments are live documents that are kept under close review by the manager. Her sound knowledge and understanding of children's needs means she can develop meaningful plans that help children to become increasingly safe and make progress in areas that are important to them.

Relationship building with professionals and family members is a strength in this home. The manager and her senior team understand the importance of developing trusting relationships and partnerships with others who are important to the children. They work

flexibly to ensure that relationships are maintained and provide children with positive experiences. Parents spoke positively about the reassurance that their children are safe and making progress.

When children's needs change and new risks or behaviours emerge, the manager seek appropriate support from other agencies to help children to overcome these. However, at times, the manager has failed to consider the wider impact of these new behaviours on other children living in the home. Her lack of action has resulted in some children feeling that their staff are unsafe and they are fearful that they themselves, may be hurt by their peers in the home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(v)(xi)(b))	28 March 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff record and respond to children's concerns and complaints about their care or any other matter when raised verbally or informally. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)
- The registered person should ensure staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. For example, where there are safeguarding concerns relating to child-on-child harm for their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, this must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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: 2794326

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Ar Curam Limited

Registered provider address: Richard House, Second Floor, Sorbonne Close,
Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS17 6DA

Responsible individual: Zak McIlhargey

Registered manager: Karen Johnson

Inspector

Beth Forster, 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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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 2026