

2810028

Registered provider: Coventry City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority managed children's home provides care for up to four children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2025 and is suitably qualified.

At the time of this inspection, no children were living in the home. Two children, who have recently lived in the home, spoke with the inspector.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 September 2025

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This home provides short-term care for children who arrive at short notice, often during times of crisis or while longer-term arrangements are being identified. Due to the emergency nature of children moving in and the limited time children spend in the home, children's progress is typically linked to achieving stability and emotional reassurance. At the time of the inspection, no children were living in the home. Since the home was registered, staff have provided care for seven children, all of whom have moved on.

Children move into the home in an emergency and during difficult times in their lives. Staff respond with professionalism and sensitivity, quickly forming positive relationships that help to reduce disruption and distress. Children are supported to understand their circumstances and are kept regularly informed about the progress being made to identify longer-term arrangements. This inclusive approach helps children feel involved and reassured about what will happen next. Children's moves on from the home are managed collaboratively, with staff ensuring children have access to relevant information and are well prepared for their move in a child-centred and supportive way.

Staff place a strong emphasis on children's education. They ensure that it remains a priority for all children. Staff maintain effective links with education providers and work proactively to secure access to formal education or suitable alternatives. Children are supported to attend school regularly, and the importance of education is consistently promoted, helping children to engage positively with their learning.

Children benefit from a wide range of engaging activities, such as swimming, bowling and trips to the cinema. These opportunities enrich their daily experiences and contribute positively to their social and recreational development. Staff are proactive in encouraging participation, which helps children to build confidence, develop new interests and enjoy their time at the home.

Staff demonstrate a strong commitment to supporting children to maintain positive relationships with their families. They facilitate regular family time by providing transport and remaining nearby to offer reassurance and support when needed. As a result, children are able to sustain important family connections, which helps to promote their sense of identity and belonging.

Children speak positively about their experiences in the home. One child said, 'Staff were nice and kind and checked on me,' and added that 'There is nothing they could improve on; everything was cool.' Another child said that they 'felt safe' while living in the home. As a result, children respond well to the nurturing and supportive environment created by staff, which helps children to feel safe, valued and well cared for.

Some restrictions on children's movements in the home are not underpinned by a clear safeguarding rationale. For example, kitchen doors are locked at night, despite there

being no identified risk to warrant this measure. These practices unnecessarily limit children's freedom to move around the home and do not contribute to creating a homely environment. As a result, children's experiences are negatively affected by unjustified restrictions.

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

Children's allegations and concerns are taken seriously by staff and leaders. They are investigated thoroughly in line with the home's safeguarding procedures. Robust investigations are carried out with strong management oversight, ensuring that concerns are addressed appropriately. This approach helps children to feel listened to, and they are confident in raising issues, knowing that staff will respond and explore their concerns with care and diligence.

Consequences with children are rarely used. This reflects the short duration of children's stays and the recognition that children often arrive at the home in a state of crisis and require time to settle. Staff focus on providing stability, support and reassurance, which helps children to feel safe and secure.

Children's achievements are consistently recognised and celebrated. Staff use a variety of approaches, including activities, treats, outings and certificates, to reward and encourage children. This helps children to feel valued during their time in the home.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of children's missing-from-care plans. They maintain active contact with children during missing-from-care episodes, undertake searches, and communicate effectively with families and professionals to support children's safe return.

Physical interventions are used proportionately and safely with children. Some staff demonstrate a strong understanding of how to de-escalate situations when children are anxious, and incidents are managed with care and sensitivity. However, records do not always clearly evidence that all staff consistently use de-escalation strategies or trauma-informed approaches when supporting children in crisis. Additionally, debriefs following incidents do not always provide meaningful reflection for staff and children. As a result, some opportunities for learning and further improving practice are missed. Leaders are aware of these shortfalls and are taking steps to strengthen recording and reflective practice.

Overall, when some children spend time in the community, staff take steps to assess and manage risk. However, some staff require further support to ensure that some children's risks are accurately identified, assessed and recorded. Shortfalls in some staff's ability to assess children's risks have the potential to leave children vulnerable in the community.

Leaders ensure that safeguarding incidents are generally reported to Ofsted in a timely manner. However, on one occasion, a serious incident was not reported. This oversight limits Ofsted's ability to maintain effective oversight of safeguarding matters and reduces

transparency. Consequently, opportunities to scrutinise and improve safeguarding practice may be missed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been absent from the home for a significant period. During this time, senior leaders and the deputy manager have provided consistent oversight to ensure that children and staff continue to be well supported. This has helped maintain stability and continuity.

Staff report feeling well supported by the management team and speak positively about their experiences of working in the home. Leaders are described as approachable, responsive and committed to staff well-being. Staff benefit from regular supervision and have opportunities to raise any concerns. This supportive culture promotes a stable and motivated workforce, which in turn promotes continuity of care for children.

Feedback from the professional network is highly positive. Staff are praised for their ability to build strong, trusting relationships with children quickly and for demonstrating a deep understanding of individual needs and behaviours. Communication is consistently identified as an important strength, and professionals report that children make meaningful progress, even during short stays. One professional said, 'Staff go above and beyond to ensure children's needs are met.' Another said, 'Staff and management were in tune with the children and how their lived experiences were impacting on their presenting behaviours.' This reflects a strong, child-centred approach that promotes positive outcomes for children.

The team is made up of experienced and inexperienced staff. Less experienced staff are still developing the skills needed to support children with complex needs, which can sometimes affect their responses. Leaders are aware of this and have introduced opportunities for staff to gain experience in other homes within the organisation, alongside a structured training programme. These steps are beginning to improve staff confidence and consistency.

Management oversight of children's care is evident but lacks consistency in being reflective and evaluative. It does not always identify areas for staff to learn and improve their practice. Furthermore, debriefs following incidents often lack depth and do not consistently provide meaningful opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice.

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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; 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)(a)(c)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff have the necessary experience and knowledge to meet the needs of children living in the home while assessing and managing risk effectively. Also, they should ensure that staff practice is consistent with the therapeutic model of care outlined in its statement of purpose, specifically in relation to de-escalation of challenging situations.	2 November 2025

The registered person must ensure that staff receive reflective debriefs following incidents to support their learning and development. The registered person's monitoring systems must be effective in identifying shortfalls.	
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are able to move freely around the home unless there are specific safeguarding concerns that warrant the locking of doors to communal areas such as the kitchen.	2 November 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. In particular, staff and the manager must implement safeguarding strategies and take immediate action to reduce the risk to children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording of all incidents and debriefs, in line with the provider's policy and procedures. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that all notifiable incidents are shared with Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be

serious. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: 2810028

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Coventry City Council

Registered provider address: Po Box 7097, Coventry CV6 9SL

Responsible individual: Angela Whitrick

Registered manager: Rachel Hallinan

Inspector

Menaka De Silva, Social Care Inspector

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