

# SC013598

Registered provider: Cherry Trees Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is registered to care for up to 14 children at any one time who have a wide range of learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities, as well as sensory impairments. A total of 55 children use the service. The home is owned by a charitable organisation and provides overnight short-break stays on a planned basis.

**Inspection dates: 6 and 7 January 2026**

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>outstanding</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|

|                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 3 December 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 03/12/2024      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 14/03/2024      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 07/12/2022      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 13/04/2021      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Children blossom during their stays at this home, due to staff having a thorough understanding of how to meet each child's individual needs. Children receive care from staff who are committed to providing them with positive experiences.

Children's voices are at the core of their care. Staff understand children's wishes and feelings and ensure that these are acted upon. In addition, the home has invested in a specialised communication aid for all children to use. As a result, children who do not use speech are further supported to make as many choices as possible through accessing this equipment.

Staff have formed nurturing relationships with the children. Children are happy and animated when they come to stay; they receive well-planned care and enjoy the activities. This was demonstrated following teatime, when all children were seen to engage in activities of their choice. Their gestures and smiles expressed their contentment and enjoyment.

Staff ensure that the children have the best time they physically can when they stay at this home. Children benefit from a wide range of carefully planned activities within the home and wider community. Staff have gone above and beyond to ensure that each child can engage in activities, by ensuring that they are inclusive for all.

Children make significant progress due to the high quality of care that they receive. Examples include a child learning how to get dressed and undressed, and children receiving support to undertake personal care independently.

Families feel well supported by staff and all who work in the home. The support provided is holistic and extends to the whole family. Parents say that they have benefited from the many family and parent-only events that have been hosted for them, such as Christmas parties, circus events and wreath-making. One parent said: 'The wreath-making event was nice. As a new mum using the service, I had time to sit down and get to know other mums. I hope they do this again – there was a good turnout.'

Staff play an important role in preparing children for their stays and for moving on. They make use of social stories to help the children to understand what is happening. Each child's time at this home is celebrated and marked with a party and a gift. This gesture ensures that each child's ongoing journey is celebrated and that they feel cherished.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Staff know and understand their roles and responsibilities to ensure that the children are kept safe. Though safeguarding incidents are rare, staff remain vigilant to indicators of

harm or neglect. Any concerns that staff may have are reported appropriately to safeguarding partners.

Children's emerging risks and behaviours are well known by staff. Effective communication at staff handover ensures that staff are updated about incidents or changes in children's behaviours. As a result, staff practice is consistent in managing children's risks and behaviours.

All children have comprehensive and rigorous care plans that are thorough and provide staff with the information that they need to care for the children and to keep them safe.

As a result of a professional boundary concern, the manager commissioned refresher training in safeguarding that included consideration of professional boundaries. The learning from this has bolstered staff responses to children and practice. Staff are confident that leaders take concerns seriously.

Children's needs are well considered to ensure that those who receive a short break alongside each other are compatible. Meticulous information is gathered before a child's stay, and ongoing observations inform behaviour plans. Incidents and accidents are infrequent, due to the high levels of supervision and the quick responses of staff.

Effective measures are in place to ensure that devices used by children in the home are regularly checked. Controls are applied to devices to ensure that children are not exposed to inappropriate content.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager goes above and beyond to support the needs of children and their families. One parent said that when they were too ill to provide care to their child, the home was responsive and increased their child's overnight stays that week to provide support with their care.

The registered manager monitors the quality of care that the children receive. They have a comprehensive oversight of the service through their audits and reviews. Improvements have been made to staff recording to capture the quality of care provided to children.

The home is visited monthly by an independent visitor. These visits provide a rigorous level of scrutiny. The manager finds these visits helpful as they give outside insight into how the home is operating and into the care that the children are receiving.

The registered manager and leaders continue to develop the service and are committed to improving outcomes for children. The manager secured funding for the new communication equipment and values this investment to improve how children's voices are heard.

Staff say that they are happy and feel well supported by the registered manager. Newer staff feel they have received a 'great induction'. In addition, staff are happy with the training that they receive. Most, but not all, staff receive regular, practice-based supervision.

Leaders and managers are consistent in ensuring that strong local community connections are nurtured between staff, children and their families. The home continues to receive support from the local community to enable them to provide positive events and experiences to children and their families. Local support, for example, enabled children and families to enjoy a circus event.

Staff receive access to company benefits to support them with their wellbeing, helping them to maintain good emotional health. Staff working in the home are motivated to provide excellent care to the children. Several staff have had consistent employment in the home for several years.

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

### **Recommendation**

- The registered person should ensure that systems are in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

### **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:** SC013598

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Cherry Trees Limited

**Responsible individual:** Claire Bryant

**Registered manager:** Paula Rankin

## Inspectors

Karen Flanagan de Martinez, Social Care Inspector  
Mark Dawkins, Regulatory Inspection Manager

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