

SC013598

Registered provider: Cherry Trees Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides short breaks for children who have a wide range of learning and physical disabilities and sensory impairments. The aims of the organisation are to enhance children's lives and support parents to look after their children well.

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since 10 May 2019.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2020

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: 8 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2018	Full	Good
06/12/2017	Full	Good
06/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/10/2016	Full	Good

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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all risk assessments contain suitable levels of guidance for staff about how to respond to any identified risks to children's health, well-being and safety.	13/03/2020
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all areas of the home are regularly checked for safety and safety hazards. The registered person must also ensure that action to rectify any concerns identified is taken within suitable timescales.	13/03/2020
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 use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(h))	13/03/2020

In particular, the registered person must ensure that there monitoring and reviewing systems appropriately take into account all areas of the home's operation.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. They will also consider what information or data recorded in the home will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the Quality Standards every six months – registered persons should use their professional judgement to decide which factors to focus on. The review should enable the registered person to identify areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.4)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, 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. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff effectively support children to be ready to come and stay for a short break at this home. Staff ensure that children have good introduction plans before staying overnight. Some children take only a few visits for this to happen; others take much longer. This flexible approach results in children settling in well and being able to benefit from long-term support that assists their growth and development.

Parents often ask social workers whether their child can come to this home because they have heard that children do well here. Staff successfully develop individual services for each child, and their family. Parents have said to a social worker that there is a homely

atmosphere here and the staff have children's best interests at heart. Another social worker said that she was impressed that, when she visited, all the children were smiling, busy and having fun.

Children's goals fit with their educational plan well. Each child has an individual goal or goals. Staff understand these goals and provide the support that children need in order to meet them successfully. Every bit of a child's progress is noticed, valued and recognised. Small achievements that children make are celebrated and shared with parents.

Healthy living is promoted well. Children who eat a limited range of foods are successfully encouraged to try to incorporate a wider variety of foods in their diet. One parent said that she was 'really happy about how he [her child] has changed what he eats', and that 'he loved coming here'. However, changes to staff responsibilities have had a negative impact on the frequency with which medication was being audited. This was changed during the inspection so that daily medication audits have been re-established.

Staff give careful thought to seating arrangements at mealtimes, to ensure that children sit with peers who get on well together. However, the children's individual needs are less carefully considered. For example, the practice of plating and serving children food at the table removes an opportunity for some children, who are able to help themselves, from doing so.

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

Staff understand and follow safeguarding policies and procedures well. Managers tenaciously ensure that they receive a conclusion to any safeguarding concern. Records of safeguarding referrals are recorded in a well-written chronology. The chronology itself is a useful record which provides a very good overview of the issue and actions taken in response to safeguarding concerns.

The manager ensures that the service keeps up to date with developments within safeguarding practice and shares this information with staff promptly. Changes to the local authority safeguarding procedures are known and followed. Her work with the staff team has increased staff's awareness of safeguarding issues such as child sexual exploitation.

Managers have supported staff to understand the importance of considering family resilience and the criteria for families to receive help (known as early help). This means that staff are better equipped to identify and recognise the need to refer families for early help quickly. This ensures that those children who need extra help to thrive can access the support they need.

Risks for children are generally identified well in risk assessments. The quality of the guidance for staff in children's behaviour management plans to reduce or prevent risk is variable. One assessment was excellent. It contained clear details of the risks and

guidance for staff to follow to reduce these risks. Another did not contain any strategies or guidance for staff to follow. In practice, staff understand the children's needs and know how to meet these needs.

Staff generally manage risks well. Few incidents of concern occur and there have been no instances of children going missing from the home. The inspector observed a member of staff vigilantly checking and stopping a child from putting items in his mouth, which on one occasion prevented a potential choking hazard for the child.

Children are seldom restrained, and, when they are, records contain good information about what occurred. Records do not always include how staff reflect on these incidents to explore whether there is anything they could have done differently to inform future practice. Managers and staff, consequently, do not have all available information to inform decisions about whether a child's care plans should change. The shortfalls in the recording of physical interventions was not picked up as part of the manager's review of the quality of care provided in the home.

The manager of the home makes good use of external advice from recognised health and safety bodies, to inform and develop practice. On the whole, staff pick up serious concerns as part of their daily health and safety checks. However, the inspector noted some trip hazards in a garden area which was not in use. Body creams in the bathroom had not been labelled correctly to show that they were to be used only for one particular child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Managers continually seek opportunities to improve the quality of care and support that they provide to children, and to their families. Developments this year include:

- greater celebration of children's achievements
- a refurbished bathroom which increases opportunities for children to develop their independence skills
- an increased availability of communal areas through the addition of a covered walkway to the art room
- improvements to records and monitoring of staff training. This has ensured that staff complete relevant courses and qualifications in appropriate timescales.

Monitoring and reviewing systems are in place but are not fully effective. The registered manager has put in place plans to rectify this; however, these recent plans have not yet been tested to assess whether they will be effective.

Staff supervision is frequent and helpful; however, managers do not review the quality of supervision and induction records. Some records do not reflect the supervision meeting in sufficient detail. Most staff induction is completed within suitable timescales. For one new member of staff, this was not the case. The registered manager had picked

up on the length of time it was taking to complete the induction and no timescale was set for this to be completed.

The arrangements for the registered manager's supervision do not ensure that she is supervised by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. This is a missed opportunity for her to reflect on her practice.

The quality of evaluation and analysis with the six-monthly report on the quality of care does not fully demonstrate that leaders and managers focus their reports on the most important issues. The reports are lengthy, contain high levels of detail and do not do justice to the high standards of care and the positive outcomes and experiences for the children using the short-break service.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: Mark Clement

Registered manager: Paula Rankin

Inspector

Ruth Coler, social care inspector

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