

SC014848

Registered provider: Cornerways Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private company. The home provides care for up to six children. The service also provides individual children with support from therapists. There were three children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2020.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 February 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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2023	Full	Good
21/03/2023	Full	Good
06/01/2022	Full	Good
03/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have developed positive and warm relationships with staff, who are attentive to their individual needs, wishes and feelings. Staff are dedicated and show genuine care. They have developed an understanding of the children's unique identities, lived experiences and family stories, which are woven throughout their care planning documents and day-to-day care. This supports an inclusive culture in this home.

Leaders and staff place heavy focus on the children's emotional well-being and mental health. They work closely with child and adolescent mental health services and therapists to ensure that the children access appropriate professionals. These relationships ensure that the staff are working in the best way to support the children's individual needs. Consequently, the children are better able to manage their challenging emotions and ask for help.

Children are supported to attend activities and interests away from the home that help them to develop as individuals. For example, one child attends singing lessons, and another goes ice skating. As well as being fun activities, these provide opportunities for the children to build relationships outside of the home.

Leaders and staff ensure that the children have time with their families regardless of the distance. This support is creative and includes wider family, former children and friends. This helps the children feel connected and valued.

Children have clear and comprehensive plans, informed by local authority care plans. Staff clearly capture and track the progress made by the children. However, there is limited attention given to the children's transition to adulthood. This is particularly relevant for one child, who currently has no assessment or plan for their transition into independence.

Leaders and staff work with a range of professionals to try and secure good-quality educational support for the children. However, none of the children are in school or have access to regular alternative provision. The children have little to no routines when they are not at school, which undermines any value staff try and place on children's learning and development. This also encourages the children to spend extended periods of time in their rooms.

The physical environment is of a high standard and full of photos and personalised items. However, modifications made to the environment detract from the family feel of the home. There are door alarms on external doors that are in constant use, and board games and baking equipment are unnecessarily kept in locked cupboards.

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

Children share positive relationships with staff, full of warmth and good humour. As a result, the children feel safe and know they can share any concerns they have with staff, and they have confidence these will be acted on.

Staff and managers know the children well and have a thorough understanding of their risks and vulnerabilities. Staff continuously assess these risks and review plans to meet the changing needs of the children.

Staff follow missing from home protocols when children are identified as missing from home. However, on one occasion staff did not notice that a child had gone missing which led to delays in the missing from home protocols being followed. There was limited reflection and learning by managers following this incident.

Physical intervention is rarely used. The manager scrutinises the records of interventions used by staff. Managers always speak with the children and staff following the use of an intervention. There is a strong focus by staff on repairing their relationship with the child promptly.

When the children make allegations about staff, managers respond swiftly to ensure the children's safety and well-being. External safeguarding agencies are consulted before thorough investigations are carried out. This results in timely, independent scrutiny of the plans in place to safeguard the children.

Staff have regular conversations with children to help them develop insight into risks. The quality of the recording of these conversations varies. The staff do not always set actions following these conversations. This makes it difficult to track the children's progress and the effect of these conversations. Leaders have not identified this as an area for staff development.

Managers respond to safeguarding concerns in a timely and sensitive manner. The manager keeps detailed records of the actions taken. The children and staff are debriefed following incidents. However, opportunities to learn lessons are missed. Although leaders explore individual concerns, they have not analysed wider systemic issues.

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

Children benefit from an established, stable and caring team. The responsible individual and registered manager lead by example and have created a culture whereby the organisation's model of care is embedded into every interaction the children have with staff. This creates consistency in care for the children.

The responsible individual and registered manager know the children well and speak passionately about the progress the children, past and present, have made. However, there are weaknesses in the leaders' oversight and monitoring of the quality of care.

Leaders have a strong focus on maintaining relationships with partner agencies and professionals. One parent said that staff 'have shown nothing but love to my children' and that it feels that 'they are part of the family'.

Staff say that they feel well supported by leaders. They have opportunities to review their practice through regular team meetings and group supervision sessions. Staff have concerns about the working hours and number of staff on shift, particularly when the children need extra support. This is affecting staff well-being and has resulted in a practice error.

Not all staff have completed their qualifications. Two members of staff have exceeded the time frame for completing the required qualifications. The manager has not taken appropriate action to ensure they are achieved.

Appraisals take place annually and offer a comprehensive review of staff well-being and progress. Staff supervision is equally of good quality; however, the frequency of supervision sessions remains inconsistent. This was a shortfall at the last inspection and remains so. This prevents leaders from quickly identifying themes around staff well-being, training and development.

Children are not always given medication in line with their identified health needs. There are shortfalls in the administration of medication. Staff do not consistently follow the medication protocol, resulting in medication errors. When errors do occur, staff are quick to seek appropriate medical support. However, leaders' investigation of these incidents and subsequent oversight of medication administration are poor.

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 registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, staff must have supervision in line with the organisation's policy. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	30 April 2025
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for 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) (2)(c)(d)(f)(h)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that children have clear routines and plans in place that encourage them to	30 April 2025

reach their full potential and that there are enough staff on shift to implement these plans.

In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff are trained and competent to safely administer medication.

In particular, the registered person must ensure that they have enough staff on duty to manage emergency situations when they arise.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that relevant units or qualifications are completed in a timely manner at an appropriate level. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 68, paragraph 1.4)
- The registered person should ensure that the home is nurturing and homely, with modifications to the environment, including use of door alarms and locks, only made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: SC014848

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cornerways Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Ashcombe Court, Woolsack Way, Godalming, Surrey
GU7 1LQ

Responsible individual: Johanna Davys

Registered manager: Amanda Castles

Inspector

Becky Paradise, Social Care Inspector

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