

SC062309

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately run and provides care for up to six children who may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment. This includes one place provided for short-break services.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home. One child moved to the home earlier this year, no children have received short breaks since the last full inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2014.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 July 2024

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: 25 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2023	Full	Good
09/11/2022	Full	Good
17/11/2021	Full	Good
13/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from nurturing care from caring staff. The staff create an environment where there is lots of joy and laughter. Staff positively reinforce that the children are respected as individuals, meeting the children's needs well in all areas of their lives. To achieve this, staff work closely with all of the professionals and children's families from the outset. This helps staff to have a well-rounded understanding of children's particular needs and how best to meet them.

Staff explore children's interests and provide them with different activities of their choice. One child loves to play the keyboard, and is currently having piano lessons, while another has taken part in Duke of Edinburgh Awards. Children are safely introduced to new experiences, such as outings to play golf and have a go at ice skating. This builds children's self-esteem, helps them to make positive contributions and enhances their opportunities.

Children are encouraged to be themselves in an inclusive environment, where differences in people are respected. Children's dietary, cultural and religious needs are met by staff. Diversity is promoted in the home through celebrations of different cultural events.

Staff are patient in their approach and take time to get to know the children. They recognise the importance of children being supported to have a voice and are proactive in seeking the children's feelings and views. Staff are mindful of the children's varied communication needs. They use children's preferred communication aids or styles to ensure that they are well understood. This includes staff signing with children or pictures and symbols being used.

Staff support children to move into the home with meticulous planning. The staff receive training from the home's practice educator, this fully meets children's complex health needs which significantly enhances children's experiences. A parent said, 'When [name of child] moved into this home it was so well planned, staff have ensured they know all of my child's health needs and have supported her with new experiences.'

Children attend school regularly. Staff accompany the children to school. This provides children with consistency of care while school staff learn how to meet children's health needs. Staff support children to achieve their educational goals. For instance, a child is currently being supported to make choice. The staff create a positive learning environment. As a result, the child's communication skills and social interactions are noticeably improving.

The home is well maintained and welcoming. Adaptations in the home ensure that children with physical disabilities can spend time with others and participate in group activities.

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

Staff attend children's review meetings and make valuable contributions to their care planning. One social care professional commented that staff know their child extremely well, and that their knowledge has supported progress with their health needs. Social care professionals and the children's parents value the staff. The high standard of care, the staff provide has contributed to children making exceptional progress.

Staff work collaboratively with other professionals, parents and family members to understand children's complex needs. Managers and staff are strong advocates for the children, communicating effectively with relevant professionals. However, there is a need to share outcomes from medical appointments more swiftly with all professionals involved in the child's life. This will ensure a comprehensive approach to children's care.

Staff receive comprehensive training supervised by a nurse practice educator to manage children's complex health needs effectively. Competency is assessed at each stage of training, ensuring they can safely perform tasks like tracheostomy care only after demonstrating proficiency.

Staff are highly attentive to children's needs, closely monitoring even subtle changes in their condition that may indicate health deterioration. The home's practice educator equips staff to handle a wide range of health requirements. A well-managed system is in place for ensuring the highest standard of care.

Safeguarding practice is effective. Staff receive safeguarding training that is specific to children's disabilities. Additionally, staff have a clear understanding of children's needs, vulnerabilities and the potential risks they may be exposed to. Staff understand how to report and respond to any safeguarding concerns. However, not all staff fully understand the role of the local authority designated officer.

The children have differing complex health needs and are all wheelchair users. The home and garden areas have the appropriate adaptations in place and are accessible for all children. There is specific equipment in place that allows children to remain safe while having their needs met.

Leaders and managers respond to incidents immediately. If these occur, staff prioritise the safety and well-being of the children. Managers are thorough in their investigations. They are prompt in sharing any learning to inform staff practice. The manager liaises appropriately with external professionals, such as social workers and the local authority designated officer. This ensures that there is external scrutiny of safeguarding measures in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced, suitably qualified and is well supported by a deputy manager and team leaders. The leadership team is very proactive in its collaboration with external agencies and parents. Many individuals are involved in the children's lives.

Time is taken to ensure that the children receive a coordinated and responsive service from all involved.

Staff are overwhelmingly positive about the support they receive from the leadership team. One member of staff said, 'It's an amazing place to work. The focus is always on the children. I really love working here; the support we get is also great, especially our training.'

There is great focus from the manager and senior leaders on ensuring that staff are extremely well supported to provide high-quality care to children. The manager provides staff with a wide range of relevant training. They are guided through regular supervision and reflective team meetings. Staff are supported to develop their skills and encouraged to take the lead through being assigned specific duties. This has developed a skilled staff team and staff carry out their roles effectively.

Feedback from parents and professionals is positive. They say that children are settled and well cared for. One social worker said, 'A strength of the service is the long-standing staff, and this means that they know the children well.'

Staff maintain detailed, individual plans for each child, updating them regularly. However, one child's plan does not reflect the current needs while in hospital. Positively, staff are fully aware of the child's needs and support them according to the current agreement with hospital colleagues. Managers are addressing this shortfall by creating an amended plan for the child while in hospital, ensuring consistent support from all staff.

There have been some staff changes, leaders and managers worked hard to address this and stabilise the staff team. The home is now fully staffed, and all staff are trained and assessed competent to support children with their needs. Safer recruitment practices have been followed; however, the manager has not had oversight of this process. This means that the manager did not have access to all relevant information to inform her recruitment decision.

The manager and senior leaders are passionate about children's well-being and achieving great outcomes. Effective monitoring systems ensure high standards of care, but the manager has not adequately reflected this in the review of the quality of care, limiting its value for service improvement. Additionally, the statement of purpose has not been updated or provided to the regulator with new staff details.

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 registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b)) The registered person must ensure that they regularly review the statement of purpose covering the matters in Schedule 1, specifically when there have been staffing changes. This statement of purpose must be provided to the regulator within 28 days.	1 September 2024
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;	1 September 2024

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) The registered manager must ensure that they have oversight of the recruitment checks for new members of staff, this should be recorded to ensure they maintain good employment practice.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) The registered manager must ensure that they adequately address all of the requirements in the review of the quality of care that is provided to the regulator every six months.	1 September 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure all staff are familiar with information sharing requirements relating to the children they care for; this relates specifically to sharing outcomes from medical appointments with professionals involved with children's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.7)
- The registered person should use internal monitoring systems to ensure that information in children's care plans is up to date, meeting children's current needs.

This includes updating children's relevant plans when children are in hospital on extended stays. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- The registered person should ensure that all staff are aware of the role of the local authority designated officer in line with the home's policy on protecting children from abuse and neglect. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.19)

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: SC062309

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Siskin Drive, Middlemarch Business Park, Coventry
CV3 4FJ

Responsible individual: Jacqueline Hills

Registered manager: Gemma Ferris

Inspectors

Jennifer Quest, Social Care Inspector
Nicola Jeffrey, Social Care Inspector

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