

2709657

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to four children who may have learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. The manager is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 31 May and 1 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers inadequate

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of this inspection, there were three children living at the home. Two of the children use non-verbal communication. It is not clear from the home's records how staff support children to be involved in their own care. Fortnightly children's meetings have not routinely taken place and there is little consultation with children. In addition, staff do not support or encourage children to access an independent advocate. As a result, it is unclear how staff support children to have a voice.

Managers have not ensured that staff conduct regular key-work sessions with children. The quality of records varies. Conversations are not linked to children's care plans or needs. In addition, staff have not developed accessible documents that could support children to understand their care plans and other records. These are missed opportunities to help children to inform how they are cared for.

Managers have not ensured that staff document important conversations and the work that they conduct with children. Until recently, there was no system in place to identify targets for children or record and acknowledge their progress. As a result, children's progress is not captured. However, one social worker told the inspectors, 'The child has come on in leaps and bounds with his mobility since his admission to the home; staff know and understand him well.'

Managers have not ensured that the children's placing authorities provide all relevant paperwork relating to children quickly enough to be of use. One child has lived at the home since February 2023 but key paperwork, such as care plans and up-to-date consent forms, has not been provided by the local authority. The home's paperwork for this child is significantly out of date. As a result, it is not clear how this child's care is being informed.

Children are settled in the home and, during the inspection, positive interactions between staff and children were observed. Staff have supported children to personalise their bedrooms. The home is clean, tidy and well maintained. It provides children with space to spend time with one another or separate time with staff away from the group.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The risk assessments in place to keep children safe vary in quality. Some documents are not up to date or accurate. Managers have failed to put in place a phone risk assessment for one child, despite being aware that he is using his phone to look at explicit images. Staff have no guidance in place to respond to this behaviour and therefore have taken no action. Managers were not aware of the frequency that this was occurring and have not made the child's social worker aware of all incidents.

Managers have not ensured that staff follow all plans put in place to safeguard children. For example, staff are not completing the daily phone checks required for one child or the twice-daily body maps for another child. These shortfalls have the potential to place children at risk.

The registered manager has not ensured that new children coming into the home are appropriately assessed and considered alongside the other children, the skills of the staff team or the home environment.

Staff restrict children's access to areas and prevent them from leaving the home. This is to safeguard children. However, these restrictions are not risk assessed or care planned. Managers have installed a keypad on the front door, which prevents children from leaving on their own accord. Staff were unclear if one child was permitted to have access to this code. The absence of planning around these restrictions means that the least restrictive option is not always considered.

The missing-from-care protocols do not provide staff with sufficient guidance on what to do should a child go missing from home. While this has had no impact, as there have been no missing episodes, it is an area that can improve.

Overall, children are settled and there are very few serious incidents. Staff manage children's behaviour well, and when staff have to hold children to keep everyone safe, it is appropriate, proportionate and for the shortest period of time. However, on occasion, staff fail to record sufficient details when they document physical interventions. In addition, managers have not always reviewed the incidents within the required timeframes.

Managers have completed investigations, and take appropriate action when they have identified staff practice concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There are serious concerns about the management of this home. The registered manager has not been at work since April 2023. The registered manager failed to put in place robust and effective monitoring systems to allow her to have effective oversight of the home. At the time of the inspection, two interim managers share responsibility for the home. The managers are supported by the operations manager and the responsible individual.

Managers and leaders have failed to ensure that staff receive the necessary training to meet the needs of children in their care. Staff have not completed training in key areas, such as safeguarding for children with learning disabilities, communication skills, and online safety. One member of staff has not obtained their level 3 diploma in residential childcare within the required timeframe. Children do not have a team of staff who are trained and experienced in children's residential care.

Safe recruitment processes are not being completed prior to staff commencing in role. Managers do not always obtain verbal verification of references or verify the reasons why staff have left previous posts working with children or vulnerable adults. Managers do not have enough information on file to ensure the safe use of agency staff. This means that not all staff have been suitably vetted to work with children.

Staff support systems are lacking. There are poor induction processes for new staff, including agency staff. Probation processes for new staff have not been utilised. This means that staff performance has not been formally reviewed. Staff have not had access to regular supervision or team meetings. This hinders staff's ability to reflect on and improve practice. Managers have not yet developed a workforce development plan. Therefore, there is a lack of understanding of the staff team's training and support needs.

Communication within the staff team is poor. Managers have not ensured that robust shift-to-shift handovers take place. Handover documents are not completed in full. During inspection, staff failed to pass significant information about a medical appointment onto the next shift. Managers do not have oversight of key-work sessions or care plans. Paperwork is often poor and lacks key details, such as dates.

Senior managers have taken action and, together with the interim managers, they are working on making changes. There is an action plan in place to help to drive forward improvements, but this has not had time to take effect and enhance the quality of care for children.

Despite the shortfalls identified, the staff reported that they feel supported in their roles and enjoy working at the home.

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that all children have detailed, accurate and up-to-date risk assessments in place for staff to follow.</p> <p>This also relates to ensuring that a thorough assessment of new children coming into the home is completed so that their needs can be met and children are suitably matched.</p>	<p>31 August 2023</p>
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	<p>31 August 2023</p>

<p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h))</p>	
<p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>The registered person may defer the relevant date if the individual—</p> <p>does not work, or has not worked, in a care role in a home for a prolonged period; or</p> <p>works, or has worked, in a care role in a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b) (6)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff obtain the residential childcare qualification within the required timeframes.</p>	<p>31 August 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow</p>	<p>31 August 2023</p>

<p>that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>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)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff are safely recruited, and full checks are completed in accordance with Schedule 2.</p>	
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction;</p> <p>ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(b) (3))</p> <p>This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff, including agency staff, have a thorough induction. In addition, all permanent staff must have a probation process in place.</p>	31 August 2023
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p>	31 August 2023

details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;

the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))

This specifically relates to ensuring that the registered person has reviewed any physical intervention within the required timeframes and that records are detailed.

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce development plan in place that meets the requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should effectively challenge any placing authority to ensure that they provide all relevant paperwork. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 56, paragraph 11.5)

- The registered person should ensure that any limits on children’s privacy or restrictions are informed by rigorous assessment and that this is 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: 2709657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Courtyard Care Limited

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

Responsible individual: Deborah Hurley

Registered manager: Zoe Whitbread

Inspectors

Debbie Holder, Social Care Inspector

Ally Tandy, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023