

1254837

Registered provider: Together for Children Sunderland Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed under trust arrangements. The home provides care for up to six children who may have emotional and social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2019.

Inspection dates: 9 and 10 August 2023

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: 24 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2023	Full	Good
08/06/2021	Full	Good
14/01/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/05/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children develop trusting relationships with staff who know them well. They are supported to build relationships with staff at their own pace. Children are making progress, even when this is incremental due to past trauma.

Children are welcomed into the home after a planned transition. They can start to familiarise themselves with their new home, the staff and other children. This helps children to settle into their home and adjust to their new surroundings.

Children are helped to develop new skills during regular discussions with staff. These are purposeful and targeted at the important subjects that are relevant to the children. Staff work with children to help them understand the impact of their behaviour and revisit this work when necessary.

Children are supported to develop their independent living skills. They work through activity booklets that help them develop skills for life. The booklets provide a description of how children are being supported and are a helpful photographic record of children for them to keep.

Staff work well with services to get children back into education when they are not attending. For example, a child who had not attended school before moving into the home has now been supported back into education. Professionals say that staff do all they can to support children back into education. This includes providing opportunities for children to learn while they are at home.

One child's bedroom was not in a satisfactory condition. The room was very untidy, with stains on the floor and clothing strewn around the room. Staff have not supported the child to keep their room in a clean condition. This does not show children that they, and the space they live in, are valued.

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

Staff bring a range of experience and knowledge to their role in caring for the children. They demonstrate a deep understanding of the children and how their trauma impacts on their behaviour and presentation. This means that they are better placed to manage the complex issues that children have.

Staff use effective de-escalation techniques to support children during crisis. Therefore, instances where children are held are rare. When a hold takes place, the details are recorded well. Staff and children take part in reflective discussions after all incidents, helping to repair relationships. This helps to keep children safe and allows staff to reflect on what they can do to better support children.

Children's risk assessments are reviewed so that there is an up-to-date

understanding of safeguarding concerns. However, not all behaviour support plans are up to date. Important information is missing, which may mean that staff do not respond effectively to a child's behaviour.

Staff respond effectively to incidents where children are missing from the home. They are proactive in looking for children when they go missing and follow their individual protocols. There is effective partnership working between staff and the police. This helps to ensure that children return home as quickly as possible.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced manager who is supported by a deputy manager and senior workers. There are established team members who have a wealth of experience and skills that enhance the team dynamics as well as new workers who have recently started working in the home.

Leaders and managers ensure that they follow safer recruitment procedures. This provides reassurance that the adults who are caring for children are safe to do so. New staff members are supported through an induction programme, and training is provided. This gives them the skills to meet the needs of the children.

Supervision provides staff with an opportunity to reflect on their practice. Supervision is child-focused, and the manager and staff explore any safeguarding concerns, staff well-being and professional development. This helps the manager to maintain oversight of staff practice and the impact their care has on the progress of children.

Managers have monitoring systems in place. This aids the manager in ensuring that children's files are up to date and have the necessary documents. The manager is also able to track the children's progress monthly. This gives leaders and managers a good oversight of the strengths and areas of development for the home.

The home uses surveillance to monitor the outside of the home and the children's bedroom doors. Managers have not sought consent for the use of this measure from all of the children's placing authorities. For the bedroom door surveillance, there has been no review of its use. The needs of the children have not been considered. This is an unnecessary intrusion that impacts on a child's right to privacy.

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 may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))	22 September 2023
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; 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 and furnished so as to—	22 September 2023

meet the needs of each child.
(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))

This specifically relates to ensuring that all children are supported to maintain clean and tidy bedrooms.

Recommendation

- The registered manager should ensure that records are kept up to date. Specifically, behaviour support plans should contain up-to-date information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 1254837

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Together for Children Sunderland Limited

Registered provider address: City Hall Floor 2, Plater Way, Sunderland SR1 3AA

Responsible individual: Majella McCarthy

Registered manager: Barry Hall

Inspectors

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

Jan Edwards, Social Care Inspector

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