

1270568

Registered provider: Care Today Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider owns and manages this home. It provides care for up to four children who may have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021. She is currently completing the relevant qualification for this role.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 February 2022

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: 26 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2020	Full	Good
12/11/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality personalised care. The members of the skilled staff team understand the children's needs and they support them to reach their potential. Family members and professionals continually praise the quality of care for children. One independent reviewing officer said, 'Staff are very attuned to [name of child] needs and they have made significant progress since moving into the home.'

Staff nurture positive relationships with children. As a result, children are comfortable and relaxed in the company of staff. Children enjoy spending time with staff and taking part in activities, including day trips, baking and karaoke sessions. This helps children to thrive in this positive environment.

Supporting children to do well in education is a priority for staff. They ensure that children attend school daily and support them with their homework. As a result, for one child in particular, there has been a significant improvement in their verbal and written communication skills. Children are proud of their achievements and recognise the importance of education.

Staff promote children's health needs. They encourage children to remain active, and some of the children go to the gym on a regular basis. Children enjoy a balanced diet and are supported to attend medical appointments as and when necessary. This helps children to understand why it is important for them to stay healthy.

Children feel listened to. This is because staff help children to express their views and opinions, and when it's appropriate to do so, staff act on these. During regular meetings, children are able to choose weekly activities and menu options. This ensures that children contribute to the day-to-day running of the home and helps them to feel valued and develop a sense of belonging.

A culture of praise and recognition of children's achievements prevails in the home. Staff support this by encouraging children to do well. For example, children are given incentives from a range of treats available. This motivates children to achieve their goals. As a result, children become more confident, and this boosts their self-esteem.

Staff focus on helping children to develop life skills. Children learn to do household chores such as cleaning and cooking, and they learn how to budget and manage their money. This helps children to develop the essential skills that they need to move successfully into adulthood.

Children live in a clean and welcoming home. Their bedrooms are decorated to reflect their tastes and interests. The home has been refurbished to a good standard

and the manager ensures that general maintenance, such as replacing worn carpets, occurs in a timely manner.

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

Children feel safe in the home. Staff complete relevant child protection training and this incorporates other potential safeguarding risks. This means that staff have the knowledge that they need to quickly respond to risks to children's safety, and they know how to raise safeguarding concerns with managers and other agencies

The use of physical restraint is rare and only used as a last resort to protect children or others from the immediate risk of harm. The manager ensures that she has oversight of these events, and when physical restraint is used, staff generally record these incidents well. Nevertheless, not all body maps completed following physical restraint include all necessary information. For example, some are not signed and dated.

The home uses electronic monitoring equipment on the children's bedroom doors. Children's risk assessments indicate that this measure is necessary to help to safeguard children, but there is insufficient detail as to why this is the case. In addition, staff do not record if children are part of this decision-making or if children understand why bedroom door alarms are in use. There is no written consent from placing authorities to demonstrate that children's social workers are also aware of the use of bedroom door alarms, and that they are in agreement with this.

Children's risk assessments are continually reviewed and updated. These provide clear guidance for staff on how to manage children's behaviours. This means that staff understand how to reduce risks to children and better protect them from harm.

There have been no occasions when the children currently living in the home have gone missing. However, staff have a good understanding of the home's missing-from-home protocols and fully understand the actions expected of them in these circumstances. This ensures that children are effectively safeguarded.

The manager adheres to safer recruitment procedures. She ensures that all relevant checks and verifications are complete before staff work with children. This means that children are supported by people deemed to be suitable.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is a positive role model for children and staff. She has high aspirations for children and promotes this ethos in day-to-day practice. The manager receives additional support from a mentor within the organisation to ensure that she is able to assess and evaluate the quality of care for children. Monitoring systems help the manager to identify areas for improvement and she uses this information to continually develop the service to meet children's needs.

Staff benefit from regular individual supervision sessions and they are included in decisions about the development of the home. However, supervision sessions do not always support staff to reflect on practice issues. This does not give staff the opportunity to think about ways to continually improve how they work with children.

The manager uses team meetings as learning and development opportunities for staff. Staff are able to share ideas on how best to support children to achieve better outcomes. This helps staff to feel more confident in supporting children. Furthermore, detailed shift handovers support staff to provide consistent care for children.

Staff complete all mandatory training and other courses that equip them for their role. This means that children are supported by staff who understand their specific needs and have the skills to meet these.

The manager works in partnership with other professionals and agencies, including with the local authority designated officer. This means that information is shared between services to ensure that children are able to access the services they need to make progress in all areas of their development.

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 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; and 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. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c))	18 March 2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, ensure that body maps completed following incidents of physical restraint include all required information.	18 March 2022

Recommendation

- The registered provider should ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive regular supervision so that they can reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 1270568

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care Today Children's Services

Registered provider address: 2nd, Floor Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Monique Bristol-Colbridge

Inspector

Evelyn Chafota, Social Care Inspector

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