

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 operates and runs this home. It provides care for up to four children and young people. The appropriately qualified registered manager has been managing the home since its registration in May 2018.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 October 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: none

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection of the children's home since registration.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirement

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(vi)(vii))	29/11/2018

Recommendation

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is with particular reference to ensuring that documents detailing the accurate contact arrangements for the children are readily available, and in addition, where stated on records that signatures are required from other professionals that this is evident.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The outcomes for the children have significantly improved, and since the children came to live in the home they are able to identify how they are making progress. The children say that their progress is a direct result of the support and encouragement that they receive from the staff. For example, both children are now attending mainstream education and although this is currently part-time.

The children live in a home that is inviting and homely. The atmosphere in the home is calm, which is enabling the children to relax and build positive relationships with peers and the staff. Professionals and others who visit the home confidently say that the children appear happy. A social worker says, 'The staff speak to the children with warmth, and care is provided in a nurturing way. This results in the children forming positive relationships with a number of staff, including their key worker.'

The children feel comfortable to express their views and are confident that their wishes are heard. For example, the children have been consulted about the changes to the decoration of the home, where to go on activities and the impact of sanctions and rewards. A child said, 'We get to do a lot of activities and we are choosing these. We have been to loads of theme parks; they are my favourite.'

The children who live in the home have been carefully matched, thus creating a secure and stable placement. All placements are planned, which helps to reduce any anxieties or false perceptions of residential care. The staff understand the children's needs and provide clear and consistent boundaries. As a result, the children are making encouraging progress with increasing structure and routine in their daily life. One child previously would choose to remain in her bedclothes for most of the day; she is now up and dressed and engaging in activities within the home and following a structured plan. The staff continue to track and record all positive contributions and progress.

Where appropriate, the children are encouraged to spend time with their families and form positive friendships. However, when there are concerns regarding contact with particular individuals this needs to be clearly recorded and risk managed to prevent any negative impact upon the child. There is no contact plan that provides the staff with the current contact arrangements and restrictions that can be shared with the child.

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

The children feel safe and report that they are protected because of the direct actions and relationships that they have built with the staff. A child said, 'I have reduced the frequency of self-harm because I am able to speak to the staff. I trust them, and they do not judge me.' This is echoed by a child's social worker who added, 'I feel the staff are passionate in their roles and work with the children in a caring, empathetic manner.'

Good relationships with the staff have enabled the children to have open and honest discussions about pertinent issues. One child felt safe enough to disclose historical abuse. However, the response from the staff has involved delay and inconsistency.

Since coming to live in the home there has been a marked improvement in the children's behaviours. As a result, a social worker felt that, '(Name of child) is safer as she is not absconding and going missing.' In addition, the police report that a child who was previously at risk of exploitation is now settled and her risks are now very well managed. The children's records are clear in identifying the strategies for the staff to follow in

order to manage and address the risks. However, within their practice the staff have missed opportunities to take immediate action to ensure the protection and confirm the well-being of children. For example, staff have not immediately gone to look for a child who was then reported missing and they also did not respond when a child informed the staff of her whereabouts, and later she was reported missing and remained missing for a number of days.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has a depth of knowledge and understanding about the children within her care. She presents with passion about the progress and aspirations that she and her team have for the children, echoing the ethos of the home. The manager's confidence in her team is a true reflection of its expressed ability to deliver care practices that provide the children with the attention, love, consistency and communication they need to create progress and promote change for the children.

The registered manager has a clear insight into the needs of the children and the newly established staff team. Time together in supervision and team meetings enables them to reflect and develop their care practices.

The registered manager has developed strong links with other agencies. This is creating positive relationships with clear lines of communication. Professionals hold the manager and the staff in high regard. A social worker said, 'A massive strength of the team is the manager. She goes above and beyond, and she is passionate and totally dedicated.' The manager challenges professionals and takes action when services are not effective for the children.

The registered manager uses internal monitoring procedures to highlight the progress and strengths of the home. The manager is highly visible in the home and from her observations and monitoring she provides the staff with continual guidance and supervision, enabling them to address any shortfalls quickly.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look

after.

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: Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Julia Walker

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, social care inspector

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