

2484441

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by the local authority and offers care for two children who have experienced early childhood instability that has led to trauma and/or associated complex behaviours.

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since April 2022 and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 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: 14 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2021	Full	Good
21/05/2019	Full	Good
11/12/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is currently one child living at the home. The inspector met the child during this inspection. The child was observed to have positive relationships with the staff.

Since the last inspection, four children have moved in and out of the home. Three children moved into longer-term placements within the local authority area and one child returned home to the care of their parents.

The child has made good progress and receives good-quality care from an experienced and committed staff group. The child has positive relationships with staff who are patient, calm and good-humoured in their exchanges with him. They are equally confident about challenging him when his behaviour warrants it or giving him time and space to work things out for himself. Staff are able to make good use of their relationships with the child to effect change.

Staff support the child to meet his health needs. The child is registered with appropriate healthcare services and attends appointments with the support of staff as required. A psychologist supports staff to review care plans and consider behaviour management techniques. This means that staff have the appropriate strategies to support the child. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the safe management of medicines to promote the safety and well-being of the child.

Staff value education and use their persuasion skills to ensure that the child has good attendance. Staff are proactive in helping the child to address any issues that arise in school. This approach supports the child to overcome barriers to his learning so that academic success can be achieved.

The child is supported to contribute his thoughts and ideas to children's meetings, for example discussing new activities and meal choices. This inclusion means that the child feels that he is a valued member of the household.

The home is mainly well maintained. However, the bathroom has some damaged plaster and the child's bedroom was found to be in a less than suitable condition. This is not conducive to creating a homely environment where children can feel proud of their home.

Staff work well with the child to support him to spend positive and safe time with people who are important to him. As a result, the child maintains a good sense of his identity.

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

Safeguarding the child is a priority of the staff team and central to their practice. The child is fully supported in keeping himself safe. Enhanced levels of supervision both inside and outside the home recognise his vulnerabilities.

Safeguarding concerns are well managed by the manager, with prompt monitoring of incidents and quick referral to safeguarding agencies. The manager works in partnership with safeguarding agencies and makes sure that appropriate safeguarding action is taken as concerns arise.

Increased staffing levels support good behaviour management. The child has made good progress with his behaviour. Incidents, including those needing physical intervention, have reduced in number significantly. Staff know the child well and are skilled in observing the signs of any escalating behaviour. Staff use a range of de-escalation techniques that are appropriate to the child's individual needs. After a physical intervention has taken place, it has been recorded and evaluated by the manager to ensure that it was proportionate and necessary, and to monitor for trends to encourage staff to reflect on and continually improve their practice.

Staff manage incidents of the child going missing from care very well. There are clear procedures in place that staff follow, for example looking for the child and contacting all relevant professionals. Managers request relevant meetings when needed, for example multi-agency strategy meetings to minimise any known risks. In addition, the manager analyses each incident. This highlights any triggers and trends and helps to prevent further occurrences.

Staff ensure that the home environment is safe for the child to live in. A range of health and safety checks are completed to assess whether there are any hazards which could pose risks to him. The child takes part in regular fire drills to ensure that he knows how to evacuate the home safely in case of an emergency.

Effective recruitment of staff prevents unsuitable people from being recruited and having the opportunity to harm children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is aware of the areas of strength and weakness in the home. He has a strong child-centred approach and high expectations of the staff team.

The home is staffed and resourced with a high staffing ratio to meet the child's needs. There is a mix of new staff and longer-standing staff, and they are beginning to work together to support the child. The staff report that they are well supported in their roles.

Staff have good-quality supervision which focuses on the needs of the child. This means that there are opportunities to reflect and learn from staff members' current practice.

Staff undertake a wide range of relevant training which supports their practice and enables them to understand and meet the needs of the child. Staff are up to date with training. Communication between team members is good. Handovers are child-focused and detailed and provide each staff member with clear guidance for the work that they are to undertake with the child.

Managers and staff have established positive networks with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in meeting the needs of the child. Staff work closely with teachers, social workers and health professionals. The child's social worker reported: 'The home has always communicated with me around supporting [name] and what works best for his day-to-day needs and additional needs.'

The home's statement of purpose is not an accurate depiction of the home. The document states that the home will accommodate children for short stays of up to 12 weeks. However, the child currently living in the home has been in place for much longer than this period, and there is no indication of how long this placement will be.

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 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— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) this specifically relates to keeping the child's bedroom clean and tidy and repairing the damage to plaster in the home's bathroom.	4 May 2023
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose.	4 May 2023

(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the home's statement of purpose is an accurate document depicting the service.	
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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: 2484441

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Registered provider address: Swann House, Boothern Road, Stoke-on-Trent,
Staffordshire ST4 4SY

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Harry Rayner

Inspector

Dave Carrigan, Social Care Inspector

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