

2484586

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority. It offers care and accommodation for up to two children who have experienced early childhood trauma.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 July 2021

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: 10 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2019	Full	Good
15/01/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, there were two children living at the home. The children are making good progress.

Children live in a warm and nurturing environment. The home is welcoming; it has been furnished and decorated to meet the needs of the children. Children's bedrooms are personalised and are well maintained. Because of this, children take pride in their bedrooms.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and restrictions, children have received good-quality individual support and care from staff, who are committed in their roles. Staff show an in-depth knowledge and understanding about each child's vulnerabilities. As a result, of these relationships, staff can support children to make positive changes and progress in all areas of children's development.

The staff and the registered manager understand and value the importance of children maintaining their family relationships, and they promote these well. They support family relationships despite the restrictions imposed due to the pandemic. For example, the staff have transported the children to see the children's immediate and extended family members. This has helped to improve the children's mental health and emotional connection with their families.

Staff work with children's social workers and teaching staff to ensure that the impact of school absence on the children's learning and development is minimal. Staff have been persistent in promoting children's engagement in learning. Consequently, children's school attendance has improved, and they are making good progress in their academic attainment.

Children are supported by staff to lead a healthy lifestyle. Staff ensure children are registered with appropriate healthcare services and children receive support to attend appointments. Where children have anxieties about attending medical appointments, staff have important discussions with them to understand these barriers. Medication kept in the home is stored and is administered safely. As a result, the children's health needs are continually promoted.

Children are encouraged and are supported to participate in a wide range of leisure and recreational activities. For example, when one child showed a keen interest in playing an instrument, staff have looked at arrangements for this child receiving piano lessons.

Staff do not always promote equality and diversity. Discussions around topics, such as children's differences and characteristics, cultural background, religion and racial origin, are not encouraged and promoted well. For example, the cultural needs of one child has not been promoted and maintained, despite the fact this child has

been living at the home for some time. This creates a missed opportunity to help children to develop an understanding of culture and diversity.

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

Staff ensure that most risk assessments have guidance about how to manage children's risks. However, the registered manager and the staff do not always ensure that risk assessments are regularly reviewed and accurately reflect all of the information about the risks that children can face. For example, one child's risk assessment had missing information about the risk of sexualised behaviours. This leaves staff without all the necessary information that they need to manage risk.

When children go missing from the home, staff act quickly to escalate concerns by following the missing-from-care protocol. They work closely in partnership with the local authority, the local services and the police. Staff ensure that children are offered a return home interview as soon as possible.

There have been incidents when staff have needed to intervene to safeguard children. These incidents are well managed and are well documented. This means that the number of incidents in the home involving physical intervention are now low. Records show that the children and the staff receive debriefs following each incident.

Managers do not ensure that the home's fire risk assessment is updated. This oversight has the potential to place children at harm. Staff do encourage children to take part in regular fire drills to ensure that they know how to safely evacuate the home in an emergency.

The registered manager ensures that staff who work in the home are vetted thoroughly before they work with children. As a result, children are kept safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is passionate and is ambitious. She inspires her staff to raise the standard of care children receive.

Staff provide positive feedback and confirm they are well supported by the manager and benefit from regular supervision and team meetings. This enables staff to reflect on their practice and on their developmental needs.

The registered manager ensures that recommendations made by the independent visitor are acted on. As a result, staff practice reflects the ethos of the home's statement of purpose.

There are positive partnerships with other agencies, such as the local authority, the mental health service, the police, the schools and the colleges, and these ensure that children benefit from a tailored support to enable them to stay safe and to make good progress.

It is acknowledged that face-to-face training for staff has been impacted by the restrictions imposed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the registered manager has not used technology well to ensure that the casual staff continue to receive refresher training. This has included receiving specialised training in contextual safeguarding, managing self-harm, food hygiene, fire safety, first aid and physical intervention. This delay has the potential to compromise the staff's ability to update their knowledge.

Overall, the registered manager uses monitoring and review systems well to help her to have a good level of oversight of 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualification and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(c)) This particularly refers to the registered manager ensuring that all staff receive refresher mandatory training.	27 August 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that adequate precautions against the risk of fire are in place and that the fire risk assessment is kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are skilled in meeting the cultural needs of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.22)
- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date, including children's risk assessments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: 2484586

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City of Stoke-On-Trent, Swann House, Boothem Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4SY

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Medan Case-Peart

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

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