

2538287

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 provides care for up to two children who may have emotional and social difficulties. The home is also registered to care for children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024. The manager is also registered for another children's home in the local authority. The manager was present during the inspection

At the time of the inspection, one child was living in the home. The child was seen by the inspector.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 June 2025

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: 11 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/11/2023	Full	Outstanding
05/07/2022	Full	Outstanding
19/10/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved out of the home. The child's wishes and feelings were considered throughout; they had regular visits to their new home with the support of staff, and their move was well planned. Staff made sure that when the child left, they enjoyed a goodbye celebration event and received gifts and photos of their time living in the home. Staff remain in contact and have visited the child in their new home. This child-centred approach helped to prepare the child for their move and reduced any anxieties they may have had.

Staff are proud of the child they care for. They smile when they talk about them. The child and staff have fun together, for example, visiting the beach, baking together and playing swing ball.

Staff are committed to promoting the child's physical and emotional health and well-being. Clinicians and staff work together to learn from the child's previous experiences and understand their triggers and presenting behaviours. Staff said that this has enabled them to think from the child's perspective and respond appropriately.

The child is making progress with their education, and their attendance is excellent. Staff and teachers communicate with each other regularly. This purposeful and child-centred communication has ensured that the child has received educational support at the right time to meet their individual learning needs.

Staff actively promote multiple opportunities for the child to share their views, wishes and feelings. Staff talk to the child about what they are worried about and encourage them to participate in developing their own plans. They also regularly sit with the child and have reflective discussions. These opportunities model safe adult relationships, which build trust and have enabled the child to communicate their needs and listen effectively.

Staff work hard to ensure that children can spend meaningful time with their families and communicate with people who are important to them. For example, the staff advocated for the child to spend additional time with a parent on a significant day in line with the child's wishes and feelings. These experiences create positive memories for the child and help them to maintain a sense of identity.

The home is welcoming and child centred. For the child currently living at the home, their bedroom is unique to their taste, with graffiti art on the walls. The registered manager and staff provide and maintain a safe and secure environment for the child.

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

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and the child's risks and vulnerabilities. Comprehensive risk assessments and safety plans are in place. The plans are generally frequently updated to ensure staff have the accurate information that they need to keep the child safe.

Children rarely complain, but when they do, the manager responds quickly. He ensures that children are spoken to, completes investigations following advice from the local authority designated officer and ensures that children are informed of any outcomes. This ensures that children feel valued and confident to raise concerns. It also helps them to feel safer and secure in their environment.

When the child is upset, staff try to de-escalate incidents therapeutically. When it is necessary for the child to be held by staff, this is proportionate. The manager has good oversight of restrictive practice and supports the staff to learn from each incident. As a result, incidents requiring physical intervention are reducing.

Staff spend meaningful time with children, and direct work is child focused and generally an area of strength. Staff have important discussions with the child about positive relationships, education and their physical and emotional health. This work is helping the child to understand how to develop their skills, understand their health needs and manage their emotions. However, staff's written recording of this time is not consistently child focused.

Incidents are generally well managed. However, there was one occasion when staff did not act quickly enough when children were upset with each other. This resulted in children complaining that they were hurt during the incident.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. He understands the home's strengths and areas for improvement. His approach is child centred, and he has high aspirations for the child in his care.

The home has a stable, dedicated staff team, which has helped the child to build secure relationships with staff and experience continuity of care. Staff say that they enjoy working in the home. They work hard to provide a nurturing environment and are committed to providing good-quality care.

Staff have frequent, good-quality supervision and appraisals; the appraisals focus on staff's progress, learning, areas for improvement and nurture. These reviews support the promotion of good practice and future progression.

Staff training is meaningful and in line with the child's needs. Learning is well embedded through regular team meetings, and staff are encouraged to openly reflect on their time

with the child. The manager has a strong oversight of staff's completion of training, and as a result, all staff are suitably trained.

The manager has a range of systems to oversee the quality of care in the home. Oversight of practice leads to discussion, challenge, support and shared learning. This actively improves the quality of care that the staff provide for the child.

The manager and staff work closely with external professionals. Feedback from one social worker was that communication was good, and the child had a strong, positive relationship with staff. They understood the child's health condition, and they supported them well.

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, The 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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that staff respond appropriately to children's safety plans to ensure children are safe.	10 July 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping, and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, 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)

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: 2538287

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stoke on Trent City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Floor 2, Stoke on Trent ST4 1HH

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Paul Barker

Inspector

Julia Tompson, Social Care Inspector

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