

2547847

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for two children with social or emotional difficulties.

There were two children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

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: 21 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2023	Full	Good
26/07/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide children with a good quality of care. Children make progress from their starting points. Staff spend time developing their relationships with children and have a good understanding of their needs. Transitions, both into and out of the home, are well planned and sensitively managed by staff.

Staff have high aspirations for children and support them with their education. Staff communicate effectively with children's schools. Any barriers to learning are quickly identified and resolved. As a result, children's attendance and engagement in education have improved since moving to the home.

Children's health needs are met. Staff ensure that children see health professionals when necessary. When children need additional support with their emotional health, staff have accessed therapeutic support from external agencies in a timely manner.

Staff provide children with opportunities to engage in activities inside and outside the home. Staff regularly seek the views of children and ensure that activities relating to their interests are promoted. Children have attended the gym, swimming baths and trips to the zoo. Staff support children to personalise their bedrooms, allowing them to be creative. This provides children with a sense of ownership.

Staff nurture children's relationships with their families and friends. This includes facilitating children's time with their family and providing them with regular updates. This helps children to maintain important relationships and develop their networks for the future.

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

Staff develop clear boundaries and routines to help children understand acceptable behaviours. Praise and rewards are used regularly to promote positive behaviour. Consequences are used only when necessary and in line with each child's behaviour management plan.

Children have individual assessments to help staff understand their known behaviours and the triggers that can escalate behaviours. Staff have the skills and knowledge to support children and de-escalate situations as required. This means that physical interventions are rarely used. When physical interventions are used, the manager evaluates these incidents to identify any learning on how to better support the children.

Staff understand the missing-from-home procedures and take appropriate action to support children. Plans reflect each child's individual needs. Staff speak with children following any incidents and support them to understand how to help keep themselves safe. On a small number of occasions, recordings made by staff

contained some errors or were only partially recorded. This may lead to information not being consistently shared between the staff team.

Children know how to make a complaint. Appropriate action is taken in response to allegations or disclosures made by children, and this is well documented. This ensures that children's views, wishes and feelings are heard.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an enthusiastic and committed manager, who is child-centred in her approach and leads by example. Staff have positive experiences of working in the home and say that the manager is very supportive. Team meetings take place on a regular basis and are well attended. The manager listens to the views of staff, and staff feel valued.

Staff access regular supervision and have an opportunity to reflect on their own learning needs. There is evidence of constructive challenge by the manager to address shortfalls in practice. New staff members have a thorough induction.

Appraisals of staff are completed by the manager. However, these do not include the views of children and other professionals. This is a missed opportunity to support staff to reflect on their practice and inform further development.

Staff have positive working relationships with children's families and partner agencies. Professionals are complimentary about the standard of care provided to the children. Family members are positive about the care that children receive.

Staff receive training specific to the needs of the children. However, the manager does not have a system in place to ensure that mandatory training is completed by staff. This could lead to inconsistencies in staff receiving the appropriate training to care for children.

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 must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that direct work sessions with children are recorded by staff in a timely manner.	28 May 2024
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person must have systems in place to ensure that mandatory training is completed by staff and that this is reviewed and monitored. In addition, the registered person should ensure that management oversight is effective in identifying minor shortfalls in practice and that actions taken are timely to rectify these.	28 May 2024
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.	28 May 2024

The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (1) (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person should ensure that the home's rotas contain a record of the actual hours worked by both staff and managers.	
--	--

Recommendation

- The registered person should include the views of the children and other professionals when completing appraisals with staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 2547847

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Registered provider address: The Portal, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire
CH65 0BA

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Laura Wright

Inspector

Carrie Mayes, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024