

SC005042

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It provides care for children with social and emotional difficulties. The children's home can care for up to 12 children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2022. She holds a level 5 diploma in leadership for health and social care and children and young people's services.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 November 2022

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: 8 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2022	Full	Good
17/09/2019	Full	Good
30/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/07/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of inspection, five children lived in the home. All the children attend school regularly. The school is part of the same organisation. Education plans consider children's abilities and interests, and staff encourage children's learning. School staff and care staff work together well. As a result, children make progress with their learning.

Staff have a good understanding of children's early childhood experiences and the care they need. Staff receive support and guidance from the organisation's psychotherapist. This helps them to develop strategies to communicate effectively with and care for the children well.

The registered manager seeks the children's views about whom they want to keep in touch with. Children's wishes are discussed as part of the care-planning process and staff support children to see people who are important to them.

All children are registered with local health services, and staff support children to attend routine appointments. When a specific health need is identified, the registered manager ensures that child's needs are assessed by an appropriate clinician and treatment plans are followed. For example, one child's mobility was assessed, and the child was advised to complete specific exercises. The child has joined a gym and is supported by her key worker to complete the exercises that will help to improve her mobility.

Children enjoy a range of activities and have lots of fun. Some children attend the local youth club, and this has enabled them to make friends who live close by. A child told the inspector that he enjoys volunteering at the local church, making drinks for the congregation. During the inspection, some children were keen to show the inspector their musical and dance talents.

Staff encourage children to develop their independence. One child has completed work on road safety with staff and is now able to visit the local shop by himself.

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home. The child visited the home and met staff before they moved in. Good preparation helped the child to prepare for the change and allay their anxieties. Two of the three children who have moved out of the home since the last inspection have done so in an unplanned way. Although staff have kept in touch with the children, the registered manager did not consider how staff and children could say goodbye and mark the children's move on from the home.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's behaviours. Risk assessments provide staff with information and guidance on identifying, reducing and managing risks. Behaviours such as name-calling and physical aggression are managed well, as is children's use of the internet. Staff use positive rewards and consequences effectively to promote behaviour, and children are well supported to reflect and develop coping strategies for the future. As a result, all children's risks have reduced.

Children have positive relationships with the staff who care for them, and they feel able to speak to the registered manager and staff if they have any concerns. On one occasion, a child made a complaint about a peer. This was taken seriously and investigated by the registered manager.

Staff help children to manage relationships with their peers. Staff have high expectations, and children are encouraged to treat each other respectfully. When conflicts between peers arise, staff support children to reflect on their actions and understand how their behaviour may impact on themselves and others. This practice has helped to reduce incidents of bullying.

Occasionally, staff used physical intervention to prevent children from harming themselves or others or from damaging property. Staff keep clear records of incidents and reflect on practice with the registered manager. They use this information and learning to inform future practice.

There has been one allegation about a person who works in the home and two historical allegations about previous carers. Managers responded quickly by reporting concerns to relevant professionals. This ensures that there is external scrutiny and that actions taken promote children's welfare and safety. However, managers do not always monitor and record the outcome of investigations undertaken by other professionals and are not always in a position to talk to and update the child as necessary.

Since that last inspection, one staff member has started working in the home. The registered manager has effective recruitment systems in place. This reduces the risk of children being cared for by unsuitable people.

It is rare for children to go missing from home. When they do, staff do not respond consistently. On one occasion, staff searched for a child who was not where he was expected to be. However, on two other occasions, staff did not look for a child before reporting them missing to police. This practice has the potential to delay locating the missing child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children receive care from a stable and consistent staff team. Most staff members hold a relevant qualification and have completed training courses that support them to provide good care for the children overall.

The registered manager ensures that staff are provided with opportunities to reflect on practice in weekly team meetings and regular, individual supervision sessions. This helps staff to deliver consistent practice and contributes to staff feeling well supported by their manager.

Professionals who support the children living in the home are positive about the care the children receive. The registered manager keeps professionals well informed about children's experiences, significant incidents and the progress that they make.

The registered manager is child focused and has a good understanding of children's plans. She has high expectations of staff and ensures that staff understand her vision.

The independent person visits the home each month. On one occasion, the person did not respond to feedback in a way that was impartial. This practice has the potential to influence views and deter complaints that need to be investigated by the registered manager.

The registered manager has monitoring systems in place; however, these are not always effective. For example, managers did not identify that staff had not searched for a child before reporting them missing on two separate occasions. This is a missed opportunity to identify shortfalls and bring about improvement when needed.

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 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)) In particular, managers should ensure that, in line with children's plans, staff search for children who are not where they are expected to be.	20 December 2022
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that monitoring systems are effective. This also relates to the role of the independent visitor, who must remain impartial when gathering information.	20 December 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should work with the placing authority to ensure that each child's transition is planned and help each child to prepare for leaving both practically and emotionally. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)

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: SC005042

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Mandy Lowe

Inspector

Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector

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