

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 eight 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.

This home is located on the same site as a school, which is registered with Ofsted separately and was not inspected on this occasion.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2022	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Good
17/09/2019	Full	Good
30/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of this inspection, five children lived in the home. Due to an escalation in a child's behaviour, they were receiving care away from the home. A plan was in place for the child to move to a new home without returning. Staff were supporting the child through this difficult time appropriately.

Since the last inspection, four children have moved on from the home. On three occasions, these moves were unplanned and were a result of children's behaviours and risks increasing. This does not support children to develop a sense of stability and belonging. One child benefited from a planned move into a semi-independent provision, which was located near the college he has enrolled in.

The registered manager ensures that all children can say goodbye to staff and children. They are given gifts and a memory book of their time living in the home. This helps children to understand and experience how endings, even in difficult times, can be managed positively.

There have been some changes to the layout of the home. This means the home is no longer accessible to day pupils at the school on the same site. A new modern kitchen has been installed, and there is a large dining area that allows children and staff to eat meals together. During children's meetings, they have raised that there are drafts coming from their bedroom windows. Some windows are old and not maintained well. Although there is an agreement in place to replace the windows, there is no timeframe for when this work is to be carried out.

All children regularly attend the school, which is part of the same organisation and is on the same grounds as the home. One child who had not attended school for two years before moving into the home now attends daily and is making progress. When there are barriers to children attending school, the registered manager and staff work well with teachers and adapt children's timetables to re-engage children in their learning. For example, one child's timetable was amended to include outdoor education as the child was finding learning in a classroom environment difficult.

Physical health is promoted well. Children are registered with local health services, and they access these appropriately. They can access therapy through the organisation's clinical team. This provides children with time to reflect on their feelings and emotions at a pace with which they feel comfortable.

Children develop positive relationships with staff who care for them. One child said all staff 'are fab'. They feel able to speak with the registered manager and staff about things that are worrying them. Children have opportunities to provide

feedback about the care they receive and are encouraged to be involved in making day-to-day decisions about the home.

Staff support children to develop daily routines that promote good personal hygiene. They are encouraged to develop age-appropriate independence skills, which will help them in adulthood.

Children are consulted with about what hobbies and activities they enjoy and would like to do. As a result, staff plan for children to join local clubs that promote their health and well-being. This also provides opportunities for them to make friends with children who have similar interests.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There have been some occasions when children have not been protected from harm. Two children's experiences have been negatively impacted by the behaviour of other children they have lived with. Furthermore, some children's behaviour towards others in the local community is alleged to have been inappropriate. These concerns contributed to the decisions to move three children from the home.

The registered manager and staff speak to children about bullying and use consequences to discourage behaviours. However, this is not always effective, and on some occasions, children have experienced name-calling, physical altercations and racist language. These experiences mean that children do not always develop positive relationships with children they live with.

Children are supported to take age-appropriate risks. They access a local youth group and have made friends in the local area. On one occasion, when out on their own, two children displayed anti-social behaviours in a local shop. Staff helped the children to reflect on their behaviours, and children were supported to return to the shop, where they apologised and donated money to the charity the shop supports.

Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention. This is used to prevent harm to children and staff, and to reduce damage to property. Staff keep records on incidents when they have used physical intervention. However, the description of the techniques used is not clear to all those who need to read the report. Managers reviewing restraint records evaluate the appropriateness of the use of the restraint. However, they do not consider if the restraint was effective in managing the risk presented to help inform future risk management.

The registered manager takes children's concerns about staff seriously. One child reported that they were hurt following a physical intervention. Information was shared with the local authority designated officer [LADO]. The guidance received from the LADO is not captured in the records. The social worker gathered the child's views, and the registered manager completed an investigation. The outcome of the

investigation was shared with the child. The child participated in a meeting with the staff member before they returned to work in the home.

It is rare for children to go missing from home. When children are not where they are expected to be, staff try to contact them on their mobile phones and search for them. They share their concerns with the police and relevant people. Staff are proactive in gathering information about where children may be. As a result, children are not away from home for long periods. Staff welcome children home and ensure that they are given an opportunity to speak with an independent person about their experiences. Records do not capture information children shared with the independent person. This is a missed opportunity to inform children's plans and prevent reoccurring missing episodes.

Children's achievements are celebrated by staff, and children receive regular praise. Incentives are used to motivate children to make progress and develop social skills.

Three staff have joined the team since the last inspection. The registered manager has effective recruitment systems in place. This reduces the risk of children being cared for by unsuitable individuals.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Systems in place to monitor the quality of care children receive do not always identify areas of practice that can be developed. Records are not written in a way that is helpful to identify patterns and trends. For example, when there are conflicts between children, staff do not reference the peer involved, and this means you cannot determine if conflicts are with the same individual or different peers.

Most staff are qualified. All staff have completed induction training and some training that is specific to their role. However, the registered manager does not arrange for staff to complete training that would help them to understand the children's individual needs.

The registered manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal. These provide staff with time to reflect on how well they care for children and identify any areas for their development. Team meetings help to promote consistent approaches to children's care.

The registered manager spends time with children, and she has established positive relationships with them. Children value this time and speak positively about her care for them. She understands the importance of working with people who are important to children and those who help to keep children safe. When there are concerns about children, she shares information with relevant people.

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. help each child to understand how to keep safe; and manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that children's plans identify all known risks, including self-harm. They should provide staff with strategies to reduce and manage concerns that are individual to the child. Discussions held with children should help them make good decisions to keep themselves safe and should be effective in supporting children to live together without harming each other.	10 April 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.	10 April 2024

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 manager should ensure that monitoring systems are effective in identifying shortfalls and that action is taken to improve the quality of care children receive.

This requirement was raised at the last inspection and is repeated.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home environment meets children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities. In particular, windows must be well maintained and action must be taken to address the concerns the children have about the drafts coming from some windows. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: The Partnership of Care Today

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

Registered manager: Mandy Lowe

Inspector

Helen Dunn, Social Care Inspector

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