

SC005042

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The privately owned service is both a children's home and a school that provides care and education for up to 10 young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours. The children's home can accommodate up to 10 young people, with a further two young people accommodated in the satellite home.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted on 4 April 2014.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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: 4 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/07/2017	Full	Good
02/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/07/2016	Full	Good
20/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 quality and purpose of care standard requires the registered person to ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6(2)(c)(i))	27/07/2018
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c))	27/07/2018
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 and help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii))	27/07/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home. 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(2)(h))	27/07/2018
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(5))	27/07/2018
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19(1))	27/07/2018
A person may only manage a children's home if by the relevant date, they have attained the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 5 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered provider	27/07/2018

considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma. The relevant date is in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home; or in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017. The registered provider may defer the relevant date if the person does not manage, or has not managed, a home for a prolonged period; or manages, or has managed, a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 28 (2)(c)(i)(ii)(3)(a)(b)(4(a)(b))	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b))	27/07/2018
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the date, time and location of the use of the measure, details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; a description of any injury to the child or any other person. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iii)(v)(viii))	27/07/2018
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	27/07/2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44(1)(2))	27/07/2018

Inspection judgements

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

Staff have not ensured that maintenance tasks are completed in a timely manner. Consequently, there are areas of the home environment that do not appear nurturing or homely. This specifically relates to some children's bedrooms. One child does not have a wardrobe or curtains in his room and was storing his belongings in a bag on the floor.

All children except one attend the on-site school and make good progress with their learning. For some children, their attendance has improved significantly, increasing to 100%. Staff and teachers communicate daily. This positive home/school relationship provides children with consistent care.

Key-work sessions take place with children. However, staff do not always plan work to meet children's individual needs. Staff complete key-work sessions with children as a response to significant incidents. This means that children do not benefit from a proactive programme of work that enables them to develop skills about how to keep themselves safe.

Children receive care from a committed staff team. Staff have positive views of the young people and want them to make progress. The stability of these relationships helps children to feel cared for.

Children receive practical support from staff so that they can visit friends and family. Staff understand the strong links that children have with their families, and the positive impact that these can have. For example, staff have supported one child to spend extended time with their family while providing support by telephone when required.

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

The positive relationships between staff and children help children to feel safe. Children confirmed this to inspectors during the inspection.

Children do not benefit from consistent behaviour management strategies. Staff and children who spoke to the inspectors gave varying accounts in respect of how sanctions are used in the home. This means that children do not always understand why sanctions are used.

Sanctions are poorly recorded, with the effectiveness of the sanction not always explored, and significant details such as injuries to children and the date and time missing from the record.

Staff told the inspectors that children's shoes are removed and locked away to prevent the children from running away. This strategy is not proportionate, nor it is explained or documented in the children's behaviour management plan.

Staff implement strategies that infringe on children's rights to access different parts of the house and to socialise with their peers. Staff informed inspectors that these

strategies are used to address issues of bullying. As a result, children are isolated from other children in the home for up to 72 hours. Children are not clear why this sanction was being imposed. Consequently, bullying in the home is not effectively managed. Children are not benefiting from sanctions which are restorative in nature and assist them to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others.

Risk assessments for some children have not been updated. As a consequence of this, risk for children is not always assessed effectively. This means that staff are without basic information that enables them to safeguard young people.

Staff respond well to children who make disclosures, and staff refer these incidents to the relevant local authority. Staff are aware of safeguarding procedures and know what to do if there is a concern.

The registered manager reviews all physical restraint incidents. However, some restraint records do not provide sufficient detail to enable robust monitoring. Records of restraint do not consistently record the methods used and the steps taken to avoid the use of the measure. This shortfall means that there are missed opportunities to review and amend practice.

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

The registered manager's monitoring and review systems have failed to identify a number of shortfalls. Consequently, this inspection has identified a number of regulatory requirements.

The registered manager has not ensured that the home operates in line with the statement of purpose. This relates to the frequency of staff supervision, which is not provided to staff as stated, which is 'normally monthly'. This means that social workers and parents are not receiving clear information about what support staff receive.

The registered manager does not always ensure that children's records contain key information or that they are signed and dated appropriately. For example, one child's placement plan was out of date and did not relate to this placement. The registered manager had pursued the local authority for the up-to-date plan. However, it was evident that he had not checked the plan on receipt as he was unaware that the local authority had sent an old placement plan. As a result, children's needs are not comprehensively identified and reviewed and their progress may be hindered.

An independent person visits monthly and reports their findings to the registered manager. However, the independent person does not seek the views of parents. This lack of contact prevents the registered manager from fully considering the views of parents and responding accordingly.

The registered manager is suitably experienced and knows the children well. However, he was not able to demonstrate that he had a qualification which is equivalent to the level 5 diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare. The registered manager also has 'area responsibility' for other homes that are operated by the organisation.

Staff are well trained and there is a good range of experience in the staff team. The registered manager undertakes reflective learning sessions with staff. As a result, children receive care from knowledgeable staff and continue to make progress in many aspects of their lives.

The registered manager is proactive in the local community and develops strong relationships with partner agencies and groups. For example, children help out at a local church and support local events. The local police community support officer is a regular visitor to the home. This helps children develop a sense of belonging in their community.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

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

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Justin Pomelli

Inspectors

Annemarie Parker, social care inspector
Pete Hylton, social care inspector

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