

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	5 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC008268
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	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	Martin Russell
Inspector	Dave Carrigan

Inspection date	5 July 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC008268

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The manager and staff ensure that young people live in a safe and supportive environment that enables them to overcome their anxiety and begin to make progress in their lives.
- Staff ensure that care planning is individualised and enables them to focus on each young person's areas of need.
- Staff have a very good understanding of safe working practices, and have established effective partnership working with all relevant agencies to safeguard and protect the welfare of young people.
- Young people attend educational placements regularly and are making good progress
- Young people receive support to learn independence skills relevant to their age and understanding. This successfully supports them as they move on to the next stage of their development.
- The manager and staff ensure that young people's views and opinions are central to the running of the home and that they are carefully considered in all decision-making
- The manager ensures that there is a wide range of constructive activities for young people to take part in both inside the home and in the local community.
- The manager and staff ensure that contact with family members is encouraged and supported.
- There are two shortfalls in practice. These include, staff supervision and not having impact assessments as part of the planning process for admissions.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
14: The care planning standard: In order to meet the care planning standard, with particular reference to impact risk assessments, the registered person must ensure that children — (1)(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and (b) have a positive experience of arriving at the home.	1 August 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Ensure that there are systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It provides medium- to long-term residential care and is owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16 March 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
9 December 2015	Full	Good
26 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
3 December 2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people enjoy good relationships with staff that help them to develop constructive and positive relationships within the home. Young people have positive views about all aspects of their care and support. One young person reports, 'The staff really do care about you and want the best for you, it's a good place to be'. A social worker reported, 'The young person that I work with is very much receiving good quality care'. The manager ensures that arrangements for dealing with medication are safe and ensures that young people receive medication important to their health. Young people have clear health plans and are registered with relevant primary healthcare services. They understand the importance of good health and are supported by staff to attend physical and psychological health appointments. All young people are engaged in education. This represents good progress because some young people were not accessing education at all prior to coming to the setting. One young person has recently sat his GCSEs and is planning to go to college. This shows that young people have aspirations and are making positive choices about their futures. Staff listen to young people and are keen to involve them in day-to-day decisions about the running of the home. Formalised young people's meetings also take place, giving them further opportunity to express their views. Young people have regular key-work sessions with staff. These sessions cover a wide range of relevant topics and are tailored to each young person's needs Young people are encouraged to maintain contact with their families and carers in accordance with their care plans. Staff clearly understand the importance of contact for the young people and if required support contact arrangements at the home. Young people receive support from staff to develop independence and life skills relevant to their age, level of understanding and ability. This includes development of self-care skills such as independent travel on public transport, shopping, preparation of meals and laundering clothes. Those who are eligible have pathway plans in place, and young people are supported in working towards their individual goals. This means that young people learn some of the essential skills that will support a successful transition into adulthood.	

Young people join local clubs and take part in activities within the wider community. For example, one young person plays for a local rugby team. This helps them to make new friendships within the community and gives them a chance to try different experiences and develop new hobbies.

The young people currently resident in the home get on well together. However, the manager has not completed an impact risk assessment. This leaves a missed opportunity to assess the impact of new placements against the needs of the young people already resident in the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe. One young person reported, 'Yes I feel safe, the carers help me, the way they talk to you about stuff anything that's wrong they will help you out with it'. Staff know how to help vulnerable young people reduce behaviours that can place them at risk. Consequently, in most instances, these behaviours reduce. Staff work effectively with other professionals such as the police and independent reviewing officer. They are proactive in seeking the views of the designated officer for advice and guidance. This demonstrates the service's commitment to keeping young people safe. The manager ensures that there are individualised risk assessments to help inform staff about the issues pertinent to each young person. These are closely monitored and updated so that they remain relevant. Staff are trained in the appropriate use of physical restraint but only ever use this as a last resort to safeguard young people. The home's records confirm that there have been no incidents of physical intervention since the last inspection. Rewards and incentives are used constructively to reward young people for their individual achievements. The manager ensures that staff know how to implement and follow the policies and procedures agreed with the local police for reporting young people missing from care. They take appropriate action to locate young people quickly and promote their safe return. For example, by actively looking for the young person and ringing friends and family. Young people are provided with an independent person to speak to on their return home. This helps staff to consider any	

information that may help to protect the young person from going missing again.

The manager has ensured that young people have access to relevant information around complaints and children's rights, with contact details for external agencies available to them. No young people have made a complaint since the last inspection but they have confirmed that they are confident to make a complaint if they feel the need to do so.

The manager ensures that regular health and safety checks, routine servicing of equipment and robust risk assessments are undertaken so that the home is kept safe for young people, staff and visitors. All staff are trained in fire safety procedures and they ensure that young people take part in fire evacuation drills so that they understand how to leave the home safely in an emergency.

The manager ensures that young people are protected by the organisation's robust recruitment practices. Staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. These procedures promote the safety of young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

Young people live in a comfortable, warm and well-maintained environment. They have ample room to engage in communal activities but also opportunities for privacy. Young people receive encouragement to personalise their bedrooms with pictures, posters and soft furnishings of their choice. This enables them to reflect their individual tastes and personalities.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home has a registered manager in place. The manager has been in post since June 2013 and is currently undertaking his level 5 diploma in leadership, health and social care. The manager is also registered at another children's home within the organisation. The manager ensures that staff receive regular training to help ensure that they have the skills and competencies necessary to meet the diverse needs of the young people who they look after. There are systems in place to ensure that important training is regularly updated or refreshed. Most staff are qualified. Those who are unqualified are within regulatory timescales at present to obtain their level 3 residential childcare qualification. The manager uses regular team meetings to ensure that all staff are up to date	

about how to promote and protect young people's safety. A reflective cycle model is used during team meetings to enable staff to reflect on any significant incidents, and how they can learn from them. This means that the learning is captured from significant incidents, which enables staff to learn and develop greater skills in their role.

The manager ensures that young people receive support as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. It provides clear information about the level of service provided as well as clear information for stakeholders about the aims and objectives and facilities offered. This helps users of the service, including young people, their parents and social workers, to be clear about what the home provides. Young people are provided with a good quality children's guide that provides them with information about what to do if they are unhappy about an aspect of their care.

The manager ensures that an independent visitor calls at the home once a month, in line with legislation. Monthly monitoring reports review the home's performance and young people's progress and identify areas for improvement. Regular consultations with young people, parents and other professionals take place to ensure that their views are considered in service development.

The manager has formed positive relationships with a range of agencies, including the police, youth offending service and placing authorities. A social worker reported, 'The placement always keep me updated with significant news and events, they also attend meetings on time and provide sound information and updates.' This ensures that there is good collaboration with key stakeholders.

The manager is committed to making continued improvements to this service. There is a thorough development plan in place to make further enhancements to the service provision.

The manager is not ensuring that staff supervision is thorough. This means that staff are not afforded opportunities to reflect on their practice and their performance is not being fully addressed.

In response to the two recommendations made at the last inspection, in March 2016, the manager has improved the dissemination of supervision records. Impact risk assessments are still not being completed. This shortfall has now been raised as a requirement.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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