

SC008268

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

A large private provider operates this home. This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 17 June 2013. He holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

On 19 and 20 February 2020, Ofsted completed a full inspection. The home was judged inadequate. A compliance notice was issued under Regulation 12 (the protection of children standard).

On 23 April 2020, a monitoring visit was undertaken. The compliance notice was deemed to have been met.

Visit dates: 28 to 29 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 19 February 2020

Previous inspection judgement: Inadequate

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred

practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

There is currently one child living in the home. The child is settled, and he is progressing well. He is happy at the home and has positive relationships with staff.

Staff capture the child's lived experiences by collecting mementos from activities he has done and by taking lots of photographs. Recent activities have included fishing and visits to the park, trampoline parks and the safari park. Staff have recently secured a place in a local football team for this child. This increases the child's confidence and he told the inspectors he was 'looking forward to his first match'.

Staff support the child to see his family and recognise the importance of him maintaining relationships with key people in his life. During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have used video calls to enable him to stay in contact with his family.

Staff encourage children to invite their friends round to the home to have a meal. This helps to promote children's social skills and sense of belonging in the home.

Staff take the required steps to promote children's health needs. Children attend health appointments and where additional concerns are identified these are pursued with the respective health professionals.

Staff understand the complex needs of the child currently in the home. One child's social worker described the staff as having a 'good understanding of his needs and putting in appropriate support to meet them'.

Staff promote children's education and help them with their learning. Staff have recently secured a full-time place in their in-house school provision for one child. This is having a positive impact on the child's progress and confidence.

Another child recently moved into the home. The child only stayed in the home for two days and he was then moved to an alternative children's home. The short duration of the placement was unforeseen and was out of the control of the manager.

The local authority's planning and execution of the change of placement for this child was poorly managed. The registered manager recognised the local authority's poor practice. However, he did not adequately challenge them about their poor communication and the impact that this had on the child.

The safety of children

Staff work hard to keep children safe. Staff talk openly with children and address any concerns or inappropriate behaviours. Children respond well to this. There have been no significant safeguarding incidents since the last inspection.

Physical interventions rarely happen. On the one occasion this did happen, staff managed the situation well.

Staff have completed a range of training to enable them to manage different risks and behaviours. Staff training needs are reviewed when any new children move into the home. This helps staff keep children safe.

Risk assessments and behaviour management plans are kept up to date. The plans are informative and give staff a good understanding of the children's needs and how risks and behaviours should be managed.

Children receive help from staff to address individual and specific risks and behaviours relevant to them. Staff talk to children about COVID-19 and help them understand the risks of the virus. Staff take prompt action to manage COVID-19 risks and follow government guidelines.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager is helpful and supportive towards staff. Staff reported that he is available when they need him. This approach is underpinned by regular reflective supervision sessions.

The registered manager has a stable and consistent staff team in place. This ensures that children have consistent and predictable care.

A social worker, independent reviewing officer and a parent spoke positively about the home and the communication from the staff. Staff have established positive working relationships with professionals and parents.

Overall, the registered manager has a good oversight of the home. The registered manager completes monthly audits that contribute to his six-monthly quality of care review. The registered manager currently uses feedback collated from children, staff and stakeholders that is gathered throughout the year to inform this review. The decision not to seek feedback at the point that the quality of care review is being completed could mean that the most up-to-date views are not considered.

The independent visitor has continued to provide external scrutiny of the quality of care provided to children. These visits have continued during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))	02/11/2020

Recommendations

- Regulation 45 sets out requirements for the registered person to have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulation at least once every six months; also see regulation 13(2)(h) (the leadership and management standard). The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Reviews should be underpinned by the Quality Standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

This relates to gathering feedback from children and stakeholders specifically for the six-monthly review.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC008268

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

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

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Martin Russell

Inspectors

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector
Dean Wilton, Social Care Inspector

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