

SC008270

Registered provider: The Partnership Of Care Today

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned young people's home provides care for up to two young people who have experienced adverse childhood experiences that have led to associated trauma and presenting complex behaviours.

An experienced and qualified registered manager is in post.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 June 2021

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: 29 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
27/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
18/07/2017	Full	Good
08/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, two young people are living at the home. Since the last inspection in January 2020, two young people who had lived at the home for many years had well-planned moves to new homes. This stability enables young people to make good progress. Staff teach young people independent living skills. As a result, young people are prepared for future independent living.

Staff encourage young people to make progress in their education. For example, young people who previously did not go to school have increased their school attendance. Staff attend education meetings to support young people's educational attainment. Staff set young people achievable targets and review them weekly. This promotes positive progress for young people.

Staff support young people to stay in touch with their families. Staff work collaboratively with families to keep them involved in young people's care. This means that young people are supported to stay in touch with people who are most important to them.

Due to the pandemic, the opportunities for young people to complete activities have been more limited. However, staff have plans in place to engage young people in activities that are relevant to their interests.

Young people live in a warm and homely environment that is well maintained. Young people build positive relationships with staff. They receive good levels of support from a consistent and committed team.

Staff promote young people's health and well-being. Staff make sure that young people are up to date with primary health appointments. Staff are proactive in addressing outstanding health needs, for example ensuring that young people's immunisations that have previously been missed are completed. On one occasion, staff did not understand the implications of a young person's potential health condition. The impact of this was minimal because medical tests eventually showed that he did not have the condition.

Generally, staff do provide young people with well-planned care. However, staff are working with one young person in a particular way due to receiving information about a behavioural diagnosis. Staff did not request further information to confirm the diagnosis or information on how to work with the young person. As a result, there is no evidence to suggest that the young person has this diagnosis. This means that the young person is potentially being labelled with a condition he does not have.

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

Staff have a good understanding of young people's risks and behaviours. This enables staff to keep young people safe and promote their well-being. Incidents are minimal in the home.

Young people respond well to incentives such as rewards and verbal praise from staff. This promotes positive behaviour. Staff provide clear guidance and boundaries to young people that they understand and adhere to.

Staff are proactive when young people are missing from home. They search for young people, call them on their mobiles, and contact any known friends that they may be with. Staff work collaboratively with other professionals such as social workers and the police, to ensure that young people return home safely.

Staff have excellent relationships with the local police community support officers. This means that staff keep up to date with any emerging risks in the local area and young people develop good relationships with the police.

Staff complete direct work with young people to inform them of the risks associated with child exploitation, drugs misuse and going missing from home. This gives young people the knowledge and understanding to help keep themselves safe now and in the future.

Staff keep young people safe from online risks, for example having internet restrictions in place and being able to monitor their online usage in the home. However, staff do not educate young people about online safety. This does not prepare young people with the knowledge and understanding to make their own safe choices relating to online safety.

Staff do not often need to restrain young people to manage their behaviour. Since the last inspection, there have been three physical restraints all of which could have been avoided. The registered manager took appropriate action to address this. The member of staff involved in the restraints no longer works for the company.

Overall, recruitment checks are compliant with safer recruitment checks. References for new employees are sought and verified. However, the registered manager has not verified the reasons why staff have left their previous employment. All other recruitment checks have been completed, including exploring any past safeguarding concerns.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since 2016 and is experienced and confident in her role. She is aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. The registered manager has a good understanding of the young people's needs and the progress they make.

The registered manager has good monitoring systems in place to make continued improvements to the quality of care provided to young people.

The registered manager supports the staff team through regular supervision and yearly appraisals. The registered manager develops staff and supports them to progress in their role. This keeps staff motivated, promotes staff retention, and ensures that young people receive consistent care.

New staff have a comprehensive induction. This has continued even when the standard induction training has been disrupted due to the pandemic. The registered manager has sought alternative learning opportunities to ensure that staff have the required skills and knowledge to meet the young people's needs.

The inspectors spoke to a social worker, a police community support officer, and a parent. All were positive about the staff and registered manager. They shared that staff were good at communicating with them and meet the young people's needs.

The registered manager and staff have good links with the local community. For example, young people and staff have positive relationships with the neighbours and they do some charitable work for the local community.

Young people are aware of how to complain, their views are sought weekly and they are given the opportunity to share their views in a variety of different ways, such as weekly meetings, discussions with staff and the registered manager. Young people feel valued and listened to.

Staff have a wide variety of training that is up to date. Overall, the training provided is relevant to the needs of the young people. Staff have not had any bereavement training. Having this training would help staff support young people who have experienced loss but are not yet ready to access counselling.

Overall, the registered manager and staff are good at promoting young people's views. They arrange advocates for young people and share young people's views with others. On one occasion, the registered manager did not challenge other professionals to promote a young person's identity and it remained an unmet need. This was an isolated incident.

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 (a)(c)) This specifically relates to the local authority advocating for a young person to ensure that their identity needs are met.	30 July 2021
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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to staff not having bereavement training.	30 July 2021
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) This specifically relates to staff having the correct information about any diagnoses young people may have.	30 July 2021

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that staff recruitment checks are undertaken to safeguard young people and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 13.1, page 61)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant knowledge to be able to respond to the potential health needs of young people. ('Guide to the young children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 7.12, page 34)
- The registered person should support young people to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. This is particularly in relation to online safety. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 9.9, page 43)

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: SC008270

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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: Kyra Knight

Inspectors

Lisa O'Donovan, Social Care Inspector
Natasha Skinner, Social Care Inspector

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