

Children's homes interim inspection

Inspection date	18/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC008271
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Philip Allcock
Inspector	David Morgan

Inspection date	18/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The new manager is sustaining the home at a good standard. He started in October 2016 and has a good understanding of the service, and the areas to improve. The resignation of the previous manager was naturally unsettling for the team. However, the interim period and transition to the new manager have gone smoothly, which is a credit to all concerned. The manager has received effective support from other managers during his induction into the company. He engages the young people well, for example by involving young people in tasks around the house. One young person has made a detailed calculation of the cost of redecorating his bedroom. The young people feel that everything is 'good'. They like the facts that the staff are 'good' and the house is clean. The two young people are settled. They enjoy themselves and have hobbies and pastimes. They get on well with the staff. No admissions or discharges have occurred since the last inspection in June and none have occurred at the sister home across the road. The team has not needed support from agency staff recently. Therefore, although there have been minor changes in the staff team, young people benefit from a reasonable level of stability. Staff involve young people in discussions about changes and developments, where appropriate. Young people appreciate this and know that their views make a difference. For example, young people were involved in developing the new child-friendly placement plan documents. Staff provide a nurturing and comfortable environment, and therefore negative incidents are increasingly rare. Instances of aggressive behaviour and of young people going missing have ceased. Young people see staff engaging well with other professionals and young people's families. One recent effect of this was that both young people experienced enjoyable Christmas celebrations with their families. The efforts of staff occasionally appear to have little effect in some areas, and one young person does not attend his education placement regularly. However, staff maintain a high level of engagement and are committed to seeking suitable	

remedies. Staff communicate well with teachers. This has helped one young person move to a class that suits him better. This means he concentrates more at school. The team is up to date with young people's academic progress but do not support them sufficiently in subjects when their attainments are lower than expected.

Staff feel that they receive a good level of support from the manager. Their supervision meetings occur on time and training is ongoing and interesting. One member of staff may not become qualified within the required timescales and the manager is monitoring this. Some senior staff are undertaking extra training in order to take on additional responsibilities. This is an important contribution to the company's succession planning strategy. Staff are excited about the imminent reopening of the sister home, where some will work.

Even at this early stage, the manager is implementing initiatives throughout the home. One involves obtaining greater feedback from the young people, for example by seeking feedback about activities. Recent comments by social workers and neighbours are positive. They say that staff are 'always on hand' and 'keep them informed'; they have no concerns about the service provided to young people.

Information about this children's home

Ofsted has registered this home for two children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A large provider of children's services operates it.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/06/2016	Full	Good
25/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/07/2015	Full	Requires improvement
12/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- Staff need to have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. If a child's progress is not in line with their agreed targets or next steps, staff should seek expert advice from education professionals, such as the Virtual School Head, SENCO, learning mentor or teacher. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.11).

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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