

SC008271

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

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2018.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 November 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 April 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2017	Full	Good
18/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/06/2016	Full	Good
25/02/2016	Interim	Improved 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.

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that children have appropriate and carefully assessed contact with their families.

- The registered person must have 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)
- All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

In particular, ensure that internal plans reflect the needs and progress of each child.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff know children well and invest in them. This nurturing ethos helps children to build secure and trusting relationships with staff. As a result, children develop a sense of belonging and make good progress. A family member told the inspector, '[My son] is like a different lad, he is much happier. The staff try really hard and look after him.'

Staff support children to participate in the day-to-day running of the home. Weekly meetings enable children to discuss key aspects of their care. In addition, staff involve children in discussing more complex decisions about their lives. For example, children work alongside staff to review their progress and agree future targets. This gives young

people a sense of ownership and responsibility for their care.

Children have excellent school attendance records and make good academic and social progress. For some, this is significant progress from their starting points. The registered manager and staff are ambitious for children. They liaise closely with education representatives to sustain children's progress. The registered manager is a strong advocate for children who are excluded from school or have no school place. His tenacity ensures that children return to education as soon as possible. In the interim, staff provide children with on-site education activities.

Children enjoy a range of activities, including trampolining and trips to local theme parks. Staff have a range of interests and expertise and use this to help children experience new activities and develop hobbies. For example, children and staff regularly enjoy fishing trips and attend the gym. Another child, a talented footballer, played for a local team and has been invited to attend a local football academy. Participation in varied activities helps children to increase their self-esteem and feel part of their local community.

Staff offer children a calm and nurturing home environment. They give children time and space to make sense of difficult emotions and behaviours. Staff offer children targeted key-work sessions and day-to-day guidance to help them learn from challenging incidents. This helps children to develop new ways of dealing with their own conflicts. A child told the inspector, 'When I first came here I was so angry. I couldn't deal with it, but the staff have really helped me. They give me advice. They set me targets. I'm a lot happier.'

Staff promote children's physical and emotional well-being. When necessary, they seek out and offer children support from specialist agencies. For example, children receive support from agencies that specialise in crime prevention, mental health and healthy relationships.

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

The registered manager and staff understand the risks associated with each child and work closely with social workers, youth offending workers and the police to keep children safe. In addition, the registered manager is proactive in identifying and managing risks in the local community. For example, he liaises closely with police community support officers when anti-social behaviour places children at risk.

Children's risk assessments are individualised and in general, contain clear staff guidance to reduce and manage risk. As a result, some children's risk-taking behaviour has significantly reduced. However, some risk assessments lack clear guidance for staff on the supervision of children. In addition, a risk assessment about a child's family contact arrangements lacks sufficient detail to ensure that the arrangement is appropriate and safe.

Staff responses are robust when children go missing. They are diligent in searching for

children and contact all individuals who may know their whereabouts. In addition, staff work closely with the police and local authorities to support children to return home. Children receive timely support from an independent visitor upon their return.

Behaviour management plans are effective and provide staff with clear guidance to recognise triggers and manage challenging incidents. Staff respond in a calm manner and support children when they are anxious or distressed. Clear rules and boundaries are also in place. As a result, incidents of restraint are rare. When they occur, records of restraint are clearly recorded and show that staff and children have time to reflect and learn from the event.

Staff promote the positive behaviour of children by offering praise and rewards. Children are actively involved in setting their own behaviour targets. They respond positively to this and feel a sense of pride and achievement when targets are met.

The registered manager ensures that staff recruitment processes are robust. This helps to protect children from exposure to unsafe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The staff team is adequately resourced and works well together to provide children with good, nurturing care. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of each child's needs and genuinely care about them. A member of staff told the inspector, 'The children come first over anything.'

Children receive individualised care from a competent staff team that offers consistent and well-thought-out care. Children regularly review their internal progress trackers with staff. This gives children a sense of ownership of their care and helps them to celebrate their successes. However, some internal placement plans lack the necessary detail and therefore do not fully reflect the current needs and progress of children.

The registered manager is innovative and keen to develop the service. For example, he spends time learning about different approaches and practice and introduces new ideas to improve children's care.

Staff benefit from access to a healthy learning environment in the home. Specialist training equips staff with the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs. The registered manager uses staff meetings to enhance learning. He is keen to develop staff and ensures that they access the in-house progression programme. Staff receive supervision on a regular basis. However, these records lack detail and do not offer staff the opportunity to discuss children's progress.

The registered manager is passionate about providing children with good-quality care and experiences. He is tenacious and challenges agencies when there are shortfalls in the services they provide to children. This ethos inspires staff to hold high aspirations and expectations for children.

Effective monitoring systems allow the registered manager to identify both strengths and areas of development within the home. He has plans in place to improve the presentation and personalisation of the home; for example, a child's bedroom is due to be decorated in the theme of his favourite football team. In addition, the registered manager has plans to further develop the staff team.

The registered manager is proactive in the local community and develops good relations with neighbours. He responds swiftly to any complaints and maintains regular, informal dialogue with neighbouring homes. In addition, staff form close links with local leisure organisations and businesses. This helps children to play an active role in their community and develop a sense of belonging.

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: SC008271

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Andrew Beechey

Inspector

Gareth Leckey, social care inspector

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