

SC008271

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

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 for up to two children who have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager holds a level 5 leadership and management qualification in health and social care and was registered by Ofsted in May 2022.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 August 2023

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: 21 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/06/2022	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/09/2019	Full	Good
28/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child has moved into the home since the last inspection. The registered manager and staff helped the child already living in the home to prepare for another child moving in. They were involved in welcoming the child when they visited, which contributed to the child having a positive experience of moving into the home.

Children benefit from positive relationships with a small staff team who provide consistent care. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Staff understand children's lived experiences and respond well to their individual needs.

The manager and staff ensure that children's interests are supported, and their views and wishes are respected. For example, one child who is passionate about horses attends horse riding lessons. Another child who no longer wishes to have swimming lessons now enjoys regular leisure swims instead.

Each week staff speak with children about their experiences of living in the home and encourage them to contribute to the daily routines and planning for the week ahead. Staff regularly explain to children the process for making a complaint or raising a concern. Despite this, no complaints have been made by children since the last inspection.

Education and learning are promoted by the manager and staff. Children attend full-time education and their plans are regularly reviewed. When there are barriers to a child's learning, staff advocate effectively for children. The manager works closely with the relevant local authorities and schools to ensure children resume full-time education following any exclusion.

Children are registered with local health services. Staff ensure that they attend routine health appointments within expected timescales. They speak with children about their health, which helps them to understand difficulties children experience in accessing support for their identified health needs. This information is then used to look at alternative arrangements. For example, one child who was not wearing their prescribed spectacles now wears contact lenses to improve their vision.

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

Children told the inspector that they like living in the home and that they feel safe. The manager and staff have a good understanding of children's behaviours and risks. On one occasion when staff noticed a change in a child's behaviour, they shared their concerns with relevant professionals without delay. The new risks were assessed and the information gathered was used to inform care planning arrangements.

The manager and staff support children to build friendships with children in the local community. They help children to think about positive qualities in a friendship, which enables children to identify unhealthy friendships. Staff have identified some friendships that influence children to engage in behaviours that are not socially acceptable. These friendships are discouraged, and the manager has made a referral to the youth justice service to carry out some early preventative work with one child.

The manager and staff help children to understand behaviour expectations, both in the home and when in the local community. When there are conflicts between children and members of the public, staff help children to reflect on situations and consider the impact of their behaviours on others. Staff use a range of rewards and consequences that promote positive behaviours and challenge behaviours that are not acceptable.

Staff receive training on managing complex behaviours that require physical restraint. This is only used by staff when absolutely necessary. Staff use the least restrictive hold for a minimal time to allow risk to be managed effectively. Staff keep records of incidents involving restraint. These are monitored by the manager, who also ensures that children and staff can reflect on the incident.

Children prefer to spend their time with friends close to the home. It is rare for them to go missing. Staff search for children and contact people who they may be with when they are not where they are expected to be. They work effectively with external services to ensure that children are found quickly and return home safely. Children speak with an independent person on their return home. However, relevant plans are not kept up to date with learning from incidents that have occurred. This has the potential to delay finding children if they go missing in the future.

Since the last inspection, one child has made two allegations against staff who work in the home. The manager's response to allegations is mixed. On one occasion, she did not ensure that there was a clear record of the allegation and the actions taken to support the decision not to share this with the local authority designated officer and Ofsted. On the other occasion, the child's concerns were appropriately investigated and shared with all relevant professionals.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a clear vision for the home, which is understood by staff. Effective monitoring systems support her to identify what is working well and what can be improved. This enables continual assessment and development, ensuring that children receive care that meets their needs and is in line with their local authority plans.

Staff receive regular supervision and attend team meetings; these provide a reflective space to discuss children and review their progress. Staff's performance is appraised annually.

There are sufficient staff who are skilled and experienced in caring for children who may display complex behaviours. All staff hold a suitable qualification relevant to their role and complete additional training to ensure their skills and knowledge remain current. One member of staff has completed a specialist course in autism and is now recognised by the organisation as an autism ambassador.

The manager works effectively with professionals. She is proactive in requesting support for children and has established links with local schools, specialist health services and youth justice services. When there are delays in external services providing information or support, she escalates this appropriately.

The home is maintained to a good standard. The decoration and furnishings provide a welcoming space where children feel able to invite friends to visit.

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, The 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
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which— is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular— provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about current or ongoing abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the home is located; provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. describe the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(d)(e)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that there is a clear record of any allegation made against staff working in the home and the actions taken, including informing relevant people of the concern, and the outcome of any investigation.	11 October 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that detailed records are kept in the home. All children's case records must be kept up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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: SC008271

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Registered manager: Stephanie Mayer

Inspector

Helen Dunn, Social Care Inspector

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