

SC008486

Registered provider: Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is privately run and managed.

Inspection date: 2 November 2017

Judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 19 June 2017

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 required improvement to be good at the last full inspection.

At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

There has been a change in the group dynamics since the last inspection. Three young people have left the home and made their positive and planned transitions to alternative care provision. There have been two young people admitted. Both young people had a detailed compatibility risk assessment prior to their admission to the home. This ensures that young people are appropriately placed and matched. The registered manager can demonstrate that he has carefully considered young people's specific needs, including the needs of those young people already living at the home. One young person who was recently admitted reported: 'I have been here for only two weeks. I've found it really nice. Staff are supportive, kind and helpful. I think I might be staying long term... It's great.'

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has made a number of staff changes.

He has introduced three experienced female members of staff to ensure that young people benefit from positive role models of each gender. The manager has also recruited an experienced deputy manager to ensure that the home is managed more efficiently and effectively. Following the last inspection, a temporary block on admissions was put in place to assist staff in securing the home's improvement.

The quality of the accommodation provided for young people has improved considerably since the last inspection. The lounge area has been completely redecorated and new furniture has been purchased for the home. The accommodation provided for young people is now more welcoming, comfortable and homely. Young people have helped to redecorate their bedrooms and assisted staff in making positive improvements to the garden. Some aspects of this work are ongoing.

There are effective arrangements in place for reviewing the standard and quality of young people's care. The home is visited each month by an independent person, who scrutinises the performance of the home and the arrangements made to safeguard young people and promote their well-being. A report is prepared for the home, and this enables the registered manager to understand its strengths and weaknesses. The manager acts on the independent visitor's professional feedback and makes good use of the home's external and internal monitoring activities to tackle any shortfalls to secure improvement. The manager demonstrates sound leadership of the home's operation and staff group.

Young people benefit from well planned, highly personalised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives. Young people make good progress, taking into account their starting points, across all aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. Young people benefit from a supportive and nurturing environment that promotes their positive experiences, progress and learning. They attend school or alternative learning regularly, with good support and encouragement from staff. The home maintains effective partnerships with the providers of young people's education to support their learning, educational achievement and progress.

Young people enjoy exceptionally good relationships with staff and with each other. They receive the support that they need to have contact with their families so that they sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them. The home maintains effective partnerships with young people's families, and this includes providing them with outreach support. A parent reported: 'They've been absolutely superb. The difference in my son now is amazing. He's a lot calmer and he says he loves living here. I think they're brilliant here. They've given him the one-to-one attention that he needed. He's now started to live under the rules of the house.'

Young people enjoy living at the home, where they are kept safe and have a strong sense of personal safety. The safety of young people is consistently at the centre of staff practice, irrespective of the challenges that this presents. The use of clear risk assessment and effective, safe working practices promote the safety and well-being of young people.

Young people described the home as being 'fun, with helpful staff'. They described staff as being 'sometimes annoying, kind and funny'. Young people reported: 'It's good. I've been here for a year. They treat you well and they give a chance to speak. Like if we get into trouble, they let you choose the consequence, so it's fair. I don't get as angry anymore. I'm calmer.'

Staff promote young people's positive behaviour and maintain good order, structure and discipline at the home. The consequences to address young people's unacceptable behaviours are fair and proportionate, when imposed. Restraint, if used at all, is only ever as a last resort to keep young people safe from harm.

Young people rarely go missing but, if they do, they benefit from an effective response from staff to secure their safe return. Young people are seen by an independent person on their return to identify the reasons why they might go missing and what steps, if any, could be taken to prevent them from going missing in the future. Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities to ensure that the right professional agencies take appropriate action to safeguard young people and promote their well-being. Ofsted was not informed of the outcome of a previous notification. While this did not place young people at risk of harm, a requirement is made in respect of this issue.

The home has met and addressed all the previous requirements and recommendations. There is improved scrutiny of referrals, and risk impact assessments are now conducted more effectively to ensure that young people are appropriately placed and matched. The arrangements to promote young people's education and informal learning have also improved. Consequently, young people make good progress in their education, training and learning, taking into account their starting points. The manager is working fewer shift patterns than he did previously, and the home has now recruited a deputy manager to ensure that there is improved management oversight of the day-to-day operation of the home. Restraint records are now monitored effectively and there are satisfactory arrangements made for young people to be seen independently on their return, if they go missing from the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement
15/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement
20/09/2016	Full	Inadequate
02/03/2016	Interim	Sustained 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.

Requirement	Due date
40(4) The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— (a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; (b) an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; (d) a child protection enquiry involving a child— (i) is instigated; or (ii) concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or (e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4))	20/12/2017

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 difference 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.

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.

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: SC008486

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: 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: Ryan Knight

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, social care inspector

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