

SC008486

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

The home is run and managed by a private company. The home cares for six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 April 2018

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: 1 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/11/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement
15/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement
20/09/2016	Full	Inadequate

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that children are in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 5.14, page 28)
- Ensure that a record of supervision is kept for all staff that provides evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation. This relates to the improved content and recording of reflective practice-related supervision. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- Ensure that records are kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home and actions taken by staff. In particular, recording the support provided to young people on their return and an account of the return home interview. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.31)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from effective, high-quality support from staff that contributes to change and improvement in their lives. Young people benefit from well-planned, highly personalised care that promotes their needs effectively.

Young people are involved in their plans and consequently they have a good knowledge and understanding of them. Young people are consulted by staff on a regular basis. This ensures that they feel valued and are able to influence and contribute to the running of their home. Young people enjoy exceptionally good relationships with staff and benefit from trusting adults who they look up to and learn from.

Young people reported, 'I think it's a fantastic home. The staff are good at working with kids. They treat us like adults but in a good way and they work with us and make things happen for us. They're doing an amazing job. Its life-changing, homely and just a great experience.'

Young people make good progress, in relation to their starting points, across aspects of their welfare and their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. Some young people attend school or an alternative educational provision on a regular basis with good support and encouragement from the home's staff. Although some young people do not yet attend school on a full-time basis, this remains a goal for all of them.

While staff work closely with the providers of young people's education to support their progress, educational achievements and learning, full-time school attendance is still work in progress.

A mentor reported, 'It's a brilliant home. I have worked in other homes and this one has impressed me the most. They have a great understanding of the children. Their approach to the children has impressed me.' One young person from overseas has learned to speak English as a result of the help, commitment and individualised support provided for him. He reported, 'I love it. The staff are good to me.'

Young people are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician and have access to these services when they need them. Medical consent is obtained so staff are clear about what types of health decisions and responsibilities are delegated to them. The home maintains effective partnerships with health professionals to promote young people's physical and emotional health and well-being.

Staff work constructively and productively with the families of young people. This ensures that young people sustain their own unique identities and enjoy their close relationships with the people who are most important to them. Staff provide an outreach service to support young people and their families. Effective partnerships are maintained with social workers, schools and parents to ensure that young people benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. A social worker reported, 'It's getting better and better for him. He loves it here and has done well since he's lived here.'

Young people know how to make a complaint if they are concerned or unhappy and their rights are promoted effectively. There have been no complaints since the last inspection and no complaints were raised by young people during this inspection.

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

The safety of young people is consistently at the centre of staff's practice. The use of clear risk assessments, combined with the staff's good knowledge and understanding of young people's specific needs and vulnerabilities, ensures that young people become increasingly safe during placement. A parent reported, 'The staff put children's safety first and promote welfare in the home. [Name] is doing well in the home, he has settled in well and enjoys being there.'

Staff promote a safe and harmonious environment for young people, where there are clear rules, boundaries and expectations for young people's positive behaviour. Each individual's presenting positive behaviour is acknowledged, praised and reinforced, while negative behaviours are appropriately challenged. The use of sanctions is fair, and restraint, if it is used at all, is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from harm.

Young people are helped to express themselves safely and deal with conflict positively. They learn to manage their feelings and self-regulate their own behaviour. Staff spend

quality time listening to young people so that they can help them to resolve any issues or conflicts they may have. Young people benefit from being cared for by staff they trust and can talk too.

The home has seen a decrease in the number of incidents of young people going missing, as some young people have moved on. Young people rarely go missing and if they do, staff actively look for them and follow the home's procedures to locate them quickly and promote their safe return. However, when young people have returned from being missing they are not always offered return home interviews. This is a missed opportunity for staff to understand and address the reasons why young people go missing.

Staff are suitably trained in safeguarding so they know how to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse. Young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Allegations of abuse are reported promptly and significant incidents are shared with the appropriate authorities to ensure that prompt action is taken by the right professional agencies to keep young people safe.

Young people benefit from a physically safe, appropriately secure, warm, comfortable and homely environment. A high standard of accommodation is provided for young people and further home improvements are planned. Health and safety arrangements are managed effectively and this provides a safe environment for young people, visitors and staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in post since May 2017. He is an experienced and well-qualified manager who has a level 5 qualification in leadership and management. He demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the day-to-day operation of the home.

The registered manager has high expectations of staff and high aspirations for the young people. He is passionate and ambitious in securing and sustaining the home's continuing development and improvement.

The home is well staffed and resourced to meet the needs and numbers of young people. Staff hold a relevant qualification at level 3 in caring for children and young people, and use this knowledge well in their care practice with young people. Staff are well led, managed and supported. They benefit from regular supervision and receive annual appraisals of their practice. However, appraisals do not include the views of young people and supervision records do not evidence child-focused discussions or show how staff are encouraged to reflect on their performance and practice. The content and recording of supervision could be improved to evidence more practice-related supervision.

There are effective arrangements for reviewing and monitoring the standards and quality of young people's care. The performance of the home is scrutinised independently by an

independent professional who checks young people's records, consults with young people and makes an impartial judgement as to whether the care provided effectively promotes their safety and well-being. The reports are sent to Ofsted each month and are available to placing authorities upon request.

The registered manager uses feedback from young people, parents, social workers and other professionals to influence the development of the home. He has a very good understanding of the home's strengths and takes action to eliminate any weaknesses to secure the home's improvement. He ensures that the views of young people are imbedded in the home's practice, and that they are able to influence and contribute to the running of their home.

The registered manager has an exceptionally good understanding of young people's needs and knows what improvements can and should happen. He champions their needs and is not afraid to challenge other professional agencies that fail to meet the needs of the young people. The registered manager maintains close partnerships with all professional agencies to ensure that young people benefit from effective support, help and protection.

An email addressed to the home from a police detective sergeant states, 'I would like to place on record my thanks to the registered manager and staff for the role they played in identifying the concerns and encouraging the victim to make a disclosure. It is only through this day-in-day-out professionalism that the victim had a strong enough relationship to discuss a very sensitive issue. It is through this partnership work with all the people that come in contact with young people that we can uncover and deal with child sexual exploitation.'

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: SC008486

Provision sub-type: 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: Ryan Knight

Inspector

Anthony Kyem: social care inspector

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