

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	17/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC008575
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	The Together Trust
Registered person address	The Together Trust Centre, Schools Hill, Cheadle, Cheshire, SK8 1JE

Responsible individual	Mrs Jill Sheldrake
Registered manager	Mrs Amanda Self
Inspector	Janine Shortman-Thomas

Inspection date	17/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC008575

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are safe and protected within the home as they receive a high level of individual care and support by a trained and knowledgeable staff team.
- Staff provide good quality care and maintain clear boundaries and routines for young people, in line with their individual placement plans, behaviour management plans and risk assessments.
- Young people maintain contact with those who are significant to them because staff encourage, support and facilitate this.
- Positive and regular communication with the manager ensures staff are kept up to date with the progress young people make, their emerging needs and the plans which are in place to address these.
- Family members and professionals have confidence in the staff team. They report that the staff are skilled at building relationships with young people, know them well and, support and enable young people to continue to make positive progress in all areas of their lives.
- The shortfalls raised within this inspection relate to keeping up-to-date and accurate records, and improving the condition of the young person's bathroom.

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):

- Ensure the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of each child. This is in particular reference to ensuring that the children's bathroom is renovated. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure all children's case records are kept up to date. This is in particular reference to ensuring that all children's health care booklets are updated following any health care reviews to ensure that their current prescribed medications are clearly identified within this. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful and clear recording. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a private charitable trust. It provides residential care for up to five young people, who have a physical and or learning disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
11/09/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people make good progress in all aspects of their development. They benefit from consistent, stable placements which enable them to develop and sustain positive and nurturing relationships with the established staff team. Staff have high aspirations for young people and are strong advocates for them. They actively pursue and challenge other agencies to ensure young people receive the care and services they require. This proactive response ensures young people receive the correct level of support and services from placing authorities, health and education providers. Staff value education for young people and actively promote this. Young people's attendance at school is excellent. They are collected each morning by their transport and taken to school. This effective and smooth transition is achieved because of the clear routines which are in place, such as the transport ringing the home to prepare the young person for their arrival. This coordinated practice between staff and the transport team ensures young people are prepared for their journey and arrive into school ready to learn. Young people's learning opportunities are further embraced by staff who provide ongoing learning opportunities within the home. Staff support young people to engage with activities such as growing herbs in the sensory garden and, increasing their semi-independence skills by regularly supporting them to shop and prepare simple foods. This holistic approach ensures young people can try new things and develop and increase their skills in line with their specific needs and abilities. Young people's health is valued and promoted. Staff work effectively with a wide range of health professionals such as; occupational therapist; speech and language therapist; paediatricians; and the company's clinical psychologist. This cohesive practice ensures young people receive the support they need as and when they require. Staff are acutely aware of young people's changing health needs and actively challenge professionals to ensure that the correct level of care and support is provided for them at all times. For example, the manager successfully challenged a medical professional to ensure one young person received the appropriate medication. This, alongside ongoing and dedicated support from the staff has resulted in the number of self-injurious behaviour episodes reducing in frequency for one young person. Contact is actively promoted to increase young people's sense of identity. Staff carefully assess and support the suitability of contact to ensure it is safe and well planned. They maintain positive working relationships with family members to	

promote good information sharing and ensure young people are supported to maintain keep in touch with those people who are important to them. One parent said: 'They ring me if they have any problems and I can ring them whenever I want. They always listen to me when it comes to (name).'

The home facilitates a range of interesting activities for young people which are designed and resourced to meet their complex and diverse needs. These include attending local youth clubs, swimming sessions and community run initiatives such as Jump Nation. In the home, young people are encouraged to access the suitably equipped sensory area, and engage with sensory toys and equipment. This supports them to develop their communication and interaction with the wider world.

Young people are supported and prepared well for their transition into adulthood. Young people's transition into adult services are thoughtfully planned and coordinated with all the necessary agencies. This ensures young people receive the right level of care and support they require during significant periods of their lives. Young people are supported well to develop their independent living skills in line with their abilities and skills. Staff understand young peoples' capabilities well and give young people the opportunities they need to develop and learn new skills in a safe and supported way.

Young people live in a large, comfortable home which is personalised to meet their individual needs. Staff ensure that young people's achievements are celebrated and pictures of these are displayed around the home. Young people benefit from the large bedrooms which they enjoy. Their toys, belongings and photographs ensure that this space provides them with a warm, nurturing homely environment to enjoy and relax in. Parents and professionals comment positively on the décor and ambiance of the home and identify this, and the care staff provide, for the progress that young people make. However one parent commented that despite plans being in place to renovate the children's bathroom, this has still to be completed despite this being identified some time ago.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people are kept safe. Staff are well supported and receive good training. They fully understand young people's needs and are confident in their delivery of good levels of care. Young people's strengths, vulnerabilities and triggers are highlighted within their individual care plans and risk assessments. These plans are understood by the staff team who routinely implement them. Plans are consistently	

reviewed by leaders and managers who systematically update the plans and share relevant information with young people's parents, social workers, health professionals and care staff. This ensures young people's holistic needs are met well.

Staff provide young people with a high level of close support and supervision because of their diverse and complex needs. As a consequence young people do not go missing from the home and are less likely to be exposed to any unnecessary risks or vulnerabilities.

Sanctions are not imposed at the home and young people are appropriately supported by staff to modify their intricate and complex behaviour. Physical intervention is used only as a last resort by adequately trained staff when young people are not able to regulate their emotional responses. Records are completed and evaluated by the manager to identify trends and patterns and to continue to develop practice further. However there are some errors noted within the present recording systems. For example any minor injuries which may have occurred during the physical restraint, which in all cases is used to prevent self-harming behaviour, are also recorded within the accident records. These two accounts do not always corroborate what actions and treatment have been administered in this instance. As a result it is not easy to establish what actions have been taken, to enable evaluation if the appropriate course of medical and behaviour management intervention has been implemented to promote the young person's welfare.

Managers have investigated and responded appropriately to any discrepancies which have been highlighted within the administration of young people's medication. Medical advice has been sought, all agencies and parents are informed, further staff training has been undertaken and, the procedures and records have been updated to prevent further errors. While staff are acutely aware of young people's present medication regime, a recent change to one young person's medication had not been updated to reflect these changes in their health booklet. Consequently the record of the most up to date prescribed medication for one young person was not recorded within this document. The manager took swift action to rectify this recording omission during the inspection visit.

Young people are increasingly safe as a result of the care that is afforded to them by managers and staff. There have been no safeguarding concerns or allegations against staff and, no issues regarding bullying since the last inspection. In addition the provider's robust recruitment and employment arrangements help ensure that staff who are recruited to work with young people are safe and suitable. Furthermore a range of health and safety checks are routinely carried out to ensure young people and staff live in a physically safe environment.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
Young people live in a home that is effectively managed by an experienced and suitably qualified manager who registered with Ofsted in January 2011. The manager is supported well in this home by the experienced and knowledgeable senior residential care staff. They share her aspirations and motivation to deliver a good standard of care as outlined in the homes updated Statement of Purpose. The manager's knowledge, skills and experience which provides clear leadership and management to the committed stable staff team, is recognised by the partner agencies. Young people live in a home where their needs are an integral part of any service development; family members, professionals and the managers attribute the progress young people continue to make to this. Competent and enthusiastic staff who have high aspirations for young people are dedicated to improving young people's experiences both within and outside of the home. Staff report that they enjoy their work with young people and they celebrate young people's achievements proudly with all. Parents and professionals say that they hold the service in high regard, because they have observed the positive difference it makes to the lives of complex young people. There are sufficient staffing levels in the home to ensure each young person's individual needs can be met. During the inspection a young person was observed to be happy and relaxed in the home. Staff talk positively about working at the home and said they feel well supported to deliver a high standard of good quality care by the management team. Regular team meetings, monthly supervisions and relevant training ensure staff are kept up to date with young people's changing needs. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and development needs of the service and, has a strong drive to continue to improve care practice. The manager regularly reviews the progress that young people make using the quality assurances processes that are available to her. The manager uses the monitoring of her development plan, work force plan, and learning from the findings which are highlighted within the monthly independent monitoring reports, to continue to make improvements within the home. The manager effectively responds to and investigates any serious incidents to ensure appropriate action is taken. All significant events relating to the welfare and protection of young people living in the home are notified to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. This ensures young people receive the right input from the relevant person or agency. Young people's records reflect their everyday lives and the work that is undertaken	

by the staff team. Family members and professionals comment that communication from the home, such as the detailed monthly reports and regular verbal and written updates they receive keep them aware of young people's progress, and is a real strength of the home. Regular reviews of young people's records ensures keyworkers and staff are provided with reliable and detailed information to ensure young people's present and emerging needs can be met.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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 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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