

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008575
Inspector	Louise Redfern
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	Jill Marie Bernadette Sheldrake
Registered manager	Amanda Jayne Self
Date of last inspection	18/02/2014

Inspection date	25/06/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	adequate
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The quality of care provided by staff enables young people to make generally good progress and achieve positive outcomes. Young people benefit from consistent relationships with staff. These relationships underpin all aspects of care practice and have contributed to young people finding stability through long-term placements.

Care planning is highly personalised and individually tailored towards young people's unique and specific needs. Good links with young people's families and relevant professionals ensure young people receive the support, help and guidance they need on a daily basis. Young people are involved in decisions affecting their lives and the daily running of the home. This is because staff are committed to empowering young people to overcome barriers to communication and have their voice heard in the home.

Young people are kept safe and made to feel safe. Young people's families and professionals confirm this. One parent commented 'the staff team do an excellent job looking after my child.' Staff show a good knowledge of young people's risks and vulnerabilities and always take positive action to ensure risks are minimised and safely managed.

The leadership and management of the home is effective. The manager places

emphasis on providing a high standard of care for young people. The staff team feel well supported in their role and are committed to the young people in the home.

There were no requirements or recommendations made as a result of the last inspection of this home. Areas for improvement from this inspection include young people being supported to access education, recording of measures of control and records being kept up to date and accurate.

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
18/02/2014	Interim	good progress
11/09/2013	Full	adequate
05/02/2013	Interim	good progress
10/09/2012	Full	good

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use any measure of control or discipline a written record is made in a volume kept for the purposes of which shall include the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 17B (3) (f))	25/07/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that all staff are given the opportunity to discuss incidents of restraint

that they have been involved in or been affected by (NMS 3.17)

- ensure that children are supported to attend school, college or alternative provision regularly (NMS 8.3)
- ensure that there is a system in place to monitor the quality and accuracy of record keeping and take action where needed. (NMS 22.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Young people who attend school make good progress in their education and have excellent attendance. Good communication is established between the home, school and the transport service; this translates to effective transitions for young people between home and school. However, some post 16 young people do not have identified educational placements, despite staff challenging education and placing authorities. All young people follow clear routines, mirroring school days and learn life skills to prepare them for returning to college or alternative post 16 provision.

Young people make choices in all aspects of their lives, despite, in some cases, very limited verbal communication. They choose what they would like to eat, what they would like to do and who they would like to support them. This gives them a greater sense of control over their lives and reduces the frustration they may feel as a result of not being able to communicate their wishes and feelings easily. This in turn helps them feel more secure and their behaviour improves as a result. This also enhances the opportunities to access community activities.

Young people make progress in the development of independent living and self-care skills. Young people make snacks and drinks, do their own laundry and choose food and pay for it in supermarkets. This has a significant impact on their development of life skills, their future living arrangements, their self-view and their self-confidence.

Young people benefit from regular, positive and appropriate contact with their families, which take place either at the children's home or at the family home. This enables them to maintain their identity and sense of self and continue to feel part of the family.

Quality of care **good**

Young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff. This is because staff are consistently concerned with young people's welfare and quality time is spent between young people and staff. The communication between the home and parents is good and takes place in a range of ways. For example, face-to face, telephone contact, emails, regular reports and during meetings. This ensures that parents and carers remain involved in their child's life and have a say in their care. Parents report they are very happy with the standard of care at the home and that they are kept well updated.

Despite young people having limited communication, their views, wishes and feelings are sought and acted upon as much as possible, using a variety of communication

aids and social stories. They influence, for example, the activities they undertake, the food they eat and what they wear. Young people have information about the complaints procedure which is designed in a format that young people can access.

Young people receive encouragement to lead a healthy lifestyle. This includes taking an active part in menu and activity planning. The manager and staff have good links with the young people's individual health services and good communication has ensured that relevant information is sought and used to inform internal health care plans.

Person-centred care planning enables young people's involvement in the care planning process. Placement plans take into account young people's cultural background and personal identity. This is positively addressed on a daily basis. For example, young people's dietary needs are effectively addressed in daily living. Staff work closely with parents and their contributions ensure that young people's identity and heritage needs are respected and positively promoted. Parents are encouraged to bring home cooked food into the home, which supports young people maintaining links with their cultural identity.

Young people live in a well-presented homely environment, which includes a full range of equipment and adaptations that suit their mobility needs and activities. Young people have their own bedrooms, which are personalised. Young people use the interactive garden and grow vegetables and flowers. Photographs of young people engaging in a variety of activities both in the home and in the community are proudly displayed around the home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Staff give young people's safety the highest priority. They make good use of a range of robust safeguarding measures such as risk assessments. Staff are aware of their responsibilities to safeguard young people and receive appropriate training to ensure they know exactly what to do to keep young people safe. This ensures young people's wellbeing and safety is effectively maintained in day to day practice.

The home has effective procedures for monitoring young people. High staffing ratios ensure young people are given the supervision and support they need to keep themselves safe. Consequently, there are no incidents of young people going missing from home and they are effectively protected from bullying and intimidation.

Young people's behaviour is effectively managed. Staff are trained in behaviour management, including the use of physical restraint and make good use of their training to manage young people's complex and challenging behaviour. Staff know young people well and have developed an understanding of the factors that contribute to young people becoming anxious, frustrated or upset. They use well thought out strategies, specific to young people's needs and levels of understanding.

An increase in the numbers of restraint for some young people is directly related to an increase of self-injurious behaviour. This behaviour is well managed through low level restraint, which as a result prevents serious harm to the young person. When restraint has been used, it has been used professionally, for the right reasons and has been recorded. However, the manager does not routinely comment on the effectiveness of the intervention, in order to evaluate if the intervention remains appropriate. Also records do not show that staff are afforded the opportunity to discuss each incident of restraint. Despite the lack of formal records staff confirm that team meetings are used to discuss incidents in order to evaluate practice and develop plans for working with individual young people.

All staff have been thoroughly checked and vetted as part of the organisations robust recruitment procedures. Visitors to the home are required to provide identification before entering the home and are suitably monitored throughout their visit. This ensures young people are protected from unsuitable people who may pose a risk to them.

Young people live in a physically safe environment. They are well protected by a range of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and routine checks. Evacuation plans which consider young people's vulnerabilities, are recorded on young people's files and are known by staff. Young people and staff are regularly involved in fire drills to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the home in the event of a fire.

Leadership and management

good

The manager has been in post since 2010, she achieved registration in 2011. She holds the NVQ Level 4 in Leadership and Management. She has over 10 years' managerial experience. The manager is young person focused and demonstrates a strong commitment to the young people in her care.

The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose, which are to provide a quality service for young people with learning disabilities. The manager provides effective leadership and guidance for staff to ensure the service continues to develop and improve. They have an understanding of the homes strengths and areas for development. The provider and the manager effectively monitor all aspects of the service, including quality of care and outcomes for young people. Consultation with young people and stakeholders is part of the monitoring processes.

Young people benefit from being cared for by a suitable number of enthusiastic, experienced and qualified staff who provide young people with consistent support to meet their individual needs. The organisation has a commitment to staff development with all staff completing mandatory and needs-led training in key areas of practice. Staff value team meetings and supervision led by the management team. All staff

have their performance appraised. As a result, staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in delivering a good standard of safe care for vulnerable young people.

Young people's written records are securely stored, managed confidentially and provide a comprehensive picture of young people's needs, development and progress. However, on occasions records are not being kept up to date. Currently there is no impact on young people, due to the consistent staff team who have good knowledge of all the young people living at the home.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.