

# SC021677

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

**Inspection date:** 5 February 2018

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Date of last inspection:** 13 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 the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

Young people make good progress taking into account their individual starting points across their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. They benefit from well-planned, individualised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives. Young people enjoy good relationships with staff and they sustain their positive attachments with people who are important to them.

Young people attend school or alternative educational provision with good support and encouragement from staff. Staff work closely with social workers and the providers of young people's education to promote young people's learning, educational achievement and progress. Staff encourage young people's participation in sports and other outdoor activities, and they ensure that young people's social, leisure and recreational needs are met. A young person reported,

'They've helped me with loads of stuff. I've missed three years of school and they've got me back in school. If you have something on your chest you can talk to staff about it. I want to stay here longer. It's good... you don't get bored. We've been to Blackpool, camping and Wales, bowling and the cinema.'

Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities so that the right action is taken by the statutory agencies to support and protect young people. The home works closely with the police and all other safeguarding agencies to promote the safety and well-being of young people. The home has seen a positive reduction in the frequency with which young people go missing from care. However, when young people do go missing staff follow the home's policies and procedures to locate them and promote their safe return.

Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with the families of young people, social workers, schools and other professional agencies to ensure that young people benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. Staff promote contact for young people and their families, and this ensures that young people can sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them.

Staff promote positive relationships and behaviour. They praise young people's achievements and routinely acknowledge, reward and reinforce their positive behaviour. There is greater use of incentives and rewards, which supersede the use of consequences to address negative behaviour. Young people are enabled to take reasonable risks to promote their growth, resilience and natural development. Young people benefit from good role models in staff they can look up to and learn from.

Staff are suitably trained in child protection so they know how to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse. At the last inspection, a recommendation was raised regarding the inclusion of whistleblowing in every staff supervision session. This has yet to be addressed and therefore is repeated.

There have been no restraints or complaints since the last inspection. Staff are trained in the use of restraint, which is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from harm. The home provides young people with a physically safe and appropriately secure environment. However, the home's carpets are heavily worn and bathing facilities are showing signs of wear and tear. Consequently, both would benefit from being replaced to ensure that the home is consistently maintained to a high-quality standard for young people.

The home is led by a well-qualified, trained and experienced registered manager who exercises strong and effective leadership of the home. There are effective arrangements for the routine monitoring of the quality of young people's care. The home is visited, each month, by an independent person who scrutinises the conduct of the home and its arrangements for safeguarding young people and promoting their well-being. The manager makes good use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to understand the home's strengths and to eradicate any identified weaknesses to secure the home's improvement.

The home has met and addressed the requirements and all but one of the recommendations from the last inspection. Young people are now attending appropriate forms of formal education and their learning is prioritised effectively. A lone working risk assessment is in place and followed in practice to ensure that inexperienced staff are not left alone to work on their own with young people. Risk impact assessments are completed prior to a new admission to the home. This ensures that the needs of other young people are taken into consideration and young people placed are appropriately matched. The unmet recommendation is in relation to the content of supervision sessions and is mentioned earlier in this report.

The storage of tools has improved, and these are now stored securely to promote the safety of young people and staff. The practice of restricting young people's access to the lounge area and turning off the electrical supply to plug sockets in bedrooms during school hours is no longer used as a blanket consequence for young people not attending school. However, should the practice of limiting an electrical supply be used in the future for specific cases, the registered manager has advised Ofsted that it would be recorded in an individual young person's behaviour management plan.

The registered manager has completed a detailed quality of care review in which the views of young people, social workers, parents and other significant people have been considered to inform the development of the home. Staff ensure that young people receive their personal belongings in a timely manner when they have moved on at short notice without there being an unnecessary delay in them receiving their possessions. The children's guide has been reviewed for young people, and it is accessible to them in an age-appropriate and more child-friendly format including photographs of home staff.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 13/06/2017      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 29/03/2017      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness          |
| 29/11/2016      | Full            | Requires improvement            |
| 22/03/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness         |

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

### Recommendations

- Ensure that supervision of staff practice includes reflection on the safeguarding culture of the home, so that staff understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. (Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality

standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14) This relates specifically to including whistle blowing as an agenda item for staff supervision.

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation. ('Guide to the children's home's regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 3.9, page 15) This relates specifically to replacing the home's worn carpets and updating the bathing facilities.

## **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.

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:** SC021677

**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:** Anthony Garmory

## Inspector

Anthony Kyem, social care inspector

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