

SC021677

Registered provider: Care Today

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation and offers care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home is managed by an experienced registered manager who is supported by a stable and committed staff team.

Inspection date: 19 September 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2018

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 was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last full inspection on 12 June 2018, three young people have remained in placement and there has been one new admission to the home. There have been no young people discharged from the service since the last inspection.

Good relationships between young people and staff are evident. Young people said they can approach staff to talk about any difficulties they may have, and that staff are receptive and help them to resolve any problems. Observation of the interactions between young people and staff clearly highlighted a genuine mutual trust and respect.

Building trusting working relationships with families is a particular strength in this home. Staff work hard to address concerns and, where possible, repair fractured relationships in a safe and sustainable way. Consequently, relationships are improved. This means that all young people have regular contact with important family members and were suitably supported to spend additional time with their families during the summer holiday period. Contact plans are regularly revised and updated to ensure that young people receive the most appropriate support to aid successful and positive contact.

Recreational activities are encouraged and supported in the home. Staff promote community friendships, and this enables young people to form friendships outside of the home and begin to feel part of their community. Young people take part in individual activities, such as cycling, youth club, football and go-carting. In-house activities such as baking, arts and crafts and electronic games are available to all young people. A young person said, 'Staff have helped me learn how to cook and bake. I really enjoy this, and I am good at it.' Furthermore, all young people enjoyed a caravanning holiday to Wales during the summer holiday. A young person said, 'It was really good fun. I can't wait until we can do it again.'

Behaviour management is consistent. Individual behaviour management plans highlight triggers for unacceptable behaviour and simple strategies to manage instances in a positive and productive way. Staff understand the young people, their individual personalities, likes and dislikes. This, coupled with trusting relationships, enables staff and young people to work together to address problematic behaviours and make positive and lasting change.

Since the last inspection on 12 June 2018, there has been one young person reported missing overnight and one young person reported as absent. Most missing from home action plans are detailed and demonstrate that staff are proactive in their response, including the search and return of young people. A prompt response from staff is completed, due to their knowledge of the names and addresses of young people's friends and acquaintances. Therefore, young people can be located quickly. However, the details of one new young person's friends and acquaintances are minimal. This means that staff are not always aware of who the young person is visiting or where they may be. A recommendation is restated to address this matter.

All young people are enrolled with, and attend, specialist education provision. Those young people with a reduced timetable are supported by a private tutor employed specifically to work in this home. During observation, young people were seen to engage well with the tutor and expressed enthusiasm about the topics for the day, which included mathematics, English and guitar lessons. Individual school reports highlight that young people make consistent progress towards their key stage targets.

Since the last inspection, the home has developed its physical intervention records. Although there has only been one minor intervention, records now demonstrate the type of hold used and the full circumstances that preceded the intervention. A staff member commented, 'Physical intervention is a last resort. We always try de-escalation and

distraction, and, on most occasions, this works. We promote a happy and safe home where communication and trust are key elements in the relationships we form with young people.'

The home is managed by an experienced registered manager who also works for the fostering service within the organisation. He is supported by an experienced assistant manager and a stable staff team. A staff member said, 'The registered manager is very supportive and is available to staff at all times.'

Staff receive regular mandatory training that is provided by the organisation. Likewise, specific needs-lead training, such as that on drug or alcohol misuse, is purchased by the organisation. However, staff have not received training in gang-related exploitation, also known as county lines. This valuable training would benefit staff working with vulnerable young people who may have a predisposition to making unsuitable friendships. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2018	Full	Good
05/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
29/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Staff should be skilled in understanding the range of influences that friendships can have and should encourage those with a positive impact and discourage those with a negative impact ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.8). Specifically, staff should ensure that young people's friendships are known and monitored.
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs ('Guide to the children's home regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11). Specifically, this is with regard to county lines training.

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: Care Today

Registered provider address: Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Anthony Garmory

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, social care inspector

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