

SC021683

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a partnership-run children's home providing care and accommodation for up to four children who may have social, emotional or mental health difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is run by an experienced registered manager who has been employed at the home since November 2020.

The structure of the home is two large Victorian houses joined together to form one big home. One side has been refurbished and can accommodate two children. There are two children in the home. The other side is being refurbished and will provide care and accommodation for young people requiring semi-independent living.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 10 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 04 to 05 November 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good

Date of last inspection: : 5 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2020	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/04/2018	Full	Good
17/10/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are cared for by a committed staff team. Staff have a good understanding of the children's individual needs. Staff balance the need to support each child with the need to promote their independence. Staff focus on supporting each child to develop their life skills based on the independence plans developed with the local authority. Staff are pro-active in supporting both children and meet regularly with each child to talk through specific needs as they emerge.

Staff show their care and commitment to each child through the relationships they develop with them. This is important as one child has struggled to engage fully with the staff team and was not present during the inspection. The inspector spoke with the other child, and they were able to talk through the ways in which staff are supporting them.

Children are making good progress from their starting points. Staff have supported one child to engage in education following a significant period of not attending school previously. They work well with the college to help them understand the child's vulnerabilities. Staff are focused on children's learning and provide individual support to another child at school. Staff knowledge of post-16 learning has helped to secure an alternative training placement for one child who has struggled to engage in their college placement.

Children's health is well supported by staff. Children's individual health needs are appropriately monitored with their relevant health professionals. Staff access specialist health services for children as required. Staff help children to develop their physical well-being through, for example, supporting one child to attend their chosen exercise class. Professionals shared positive feedback about the staff team, whose members understand each child's needs well.

Staff work effectively with children's families, which is key because each child has only recently come into care. Children are supported to spend time with their parents and siblings, including observing their faith. The parent of one child acknowledged in their feedback to the home that the positive changes in their child's behaviour were due to the care provided by the team, despite the child struggling to engage fully with the support offered by staff.

The guide provided to children when they move into the home does not reflect the home's statement of purpose. There is no explanation of independent advocacy or where and how children can access this. Some of the language used is not child-centred and does not reflect the culture of the home. There is no reference to the Registered Manager or the Children's Commissioner.

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

Staff have a good understanding of the individual risks identified for each child and the strategies staff use to reduce these. Staff are provided with clear guidance for addressing risk, which is regularly reviewed and updated in response to new and emerging risk. Staff help each child to understand their individual risks, and they talk with each of them about how to keep themselves safe. These risks are mainly associated with a child being missing from care, including the potential risk of child criminal exploitation, and of radicalisation.

Staff are tenacious in their response to children being missing from the home. Staff persistently search any known areas where children may be. Staff maintain regular contact with children and their families throughout missing episodes. This was observed by the inspector due to one child being missing during the inspection. The reasons for the child going missing are understood to relate to their wish to return to their local area to spend time with family, as they were doing on this occasion. Feedback from a professional confirmed that the plan is for the child to now return to their local area.

Staff communicate effectively with police and statutory agencies, ensuring all information is shared as it becomes known. Children are offered, and will generally engage in, return home interviews. Staff ensure these interviews take place if there is any delay in arranging these. This approach, together with detailed recordings of missing episodes, helps staff to develop an understanding of new or emerging risks. There is an example of collaborative working with all relevant agencies following another child's missing from home episode, with the child being referred for specialist support, to address an emerging risk.

The building works currently being undertaken at the home have been appropriately assessed. The potential risks, both inside and outside of the building, have been addressed, with strategies in place to minimise any health and safety issues arising.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is child-focused and is a good advocate for children. They have a thorough understanding of children's individual needs and vulnerabilities. The registered manager's effective monitoring of the quality of care provided helps them to track children's progress in the context of children's differing starting points. They develop supportive relationships with children's families, and this helps ensure that good communication is promoted.

The registered manager has a clear vision for the home and expectations of the quality of care that staff provide for children. The registered manager has developed the culture in the home. As a dual registered manager, they have shared learning from the other home in order to help strengthen staff practice in this home. They have seen some changes in the staff team. However, this has not impacted on the

support provided to children, with new and established staff working together well as a team.

Staff feel well supported by the manager, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. They feel their individual support needs are well understood. Staff are provided with regular individual supervision, which they appreciate as a space to reflect on their own practice. Learning and training opportunities provided to staff are valued, with these opportunities moving back to face-to-face interaction following a period of virtual learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The registered manager is currently managing the planned building works that are taking place to improve the quality of semi-independent accommodation. The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths of the home, and a good focus on developing the service to best meet the needs of children and young people. This has included changing staffing rotas and responsibilities to effectively support the children living in the home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c))	31 December 2021

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC049189

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Nigel Evans

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, Social Care Inspector

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