

SC025712

Registered provider: The Together Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a voluntary organisation. It provides care for up to 2 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager post is vacant. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home and spoke with the inspector about their experiences.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 and 18 July 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/09/2023	Full	good
13/12/2022	Full	requires improvement to be good
06/07/2021	Full	good
29/10/2019	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

One child has lived at the home for a significant period of time. They are settled and have made remarkable progress in all areas of their development, including physical health, education, social skills, emotional wellbeing and behavioural stability.

The child has loving, secure and trusting relationships with staff. One staff member said, 'I have been with [child's name] since day one. We adore her and are so proud.' Staff provide consistency and stability. This has supported the child to develop a strong sense of permanence and belonging.

Another child moved into the home for a short time. However, despite a well-planned move into the home, the child's needs were too high for the staff to manage. This led to poor dynamics between the children. Managers and staff were persistent in their efforts to actively seek ways to resolve the situation. However, the physical environment was not suitable to meet the child's physical needs and did not afford either child privacy.

The manager and the child's social worker worked collaboratively to ensure that the child experienced a smooth transition from the home. As a result, the child moved into a more suitable placement. The social worker said, 'Staff worked really hard to manage the situation between [name of child] and her peer. They remained very child focused throughout.'

The manager and staff promote the child's education. The child is in full-time education and is supported to attend and engage in their education. The child is achieving and making progress.

Staff understand the importance of the child's friendships and actively support these by welcoming the child's friends into the home. The child is forming positive friendships with peers and is increasingly able to make informed choices about their actions.

Staff go over and above to actively promote and support the child to spend time with their family. The child's father enjoyed having Christmas dinner at the home. He said, 'It was the best Christmas I have had in a long time.' The child's grandparents said, '[Child] has come on leaps and bounds since living in this home.'

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

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the home. Staff have an excellent understanding of safeguarding procedures, behaviour management and whistleblowing procedures.

The child experiences clear and consistent boundaries, embedded within daily routines. This ensures a structured environment that promotes emotional wellbeing and a strong sense of security.

Safeguarding incidents are rare at this home. When incidents do occur, staff ensure that procedures are followed. There have been no incidents of the child going missing from home or the use of physical intervention.

Consequences are used rarely at the home. When they are applied, they give the child an opportunity to reflect and take responsibility for their actions. Staff use incentives effectively to motivate the child to develop positive behaviours and to help reduce risks.

A complaint raised by one child was taken seriously, with appropriate investigations undertaken by the manager. The child was kept informed of the progress and outcome of the complaint, which reinforced their sense of being valued and safe.

The manager notifies the regulator about safeguarding incidents. However, on one occasion, the manager did not notify the designated safeguarding officer or Ofsted about an allegation. This limits external oversight of safeguarding practice.

Health and safety arrangements ensure that the child, staff and visitors are protected from environmental risks or hazards. The locality risk assessment is up to date, but lacks consultation with relevant local agencies.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and has significant experience of working in residential care with children with diverse needs. He is supported by a highly experienced deputy manager. Together, they are highly motivated and ambitious in their vision for the child. They have high expectations of staff and are committed to improving outcomes for the child.

Staff consistency ensures that a cohesive staff team provide consistent care. Staff are highly complimentary about the support they receive from the managers. Staff commitment and morale are high.

Staff benefit from high-quality, regular supervision provided by both the manager and deputy. Supervision sessions maintain a strong focus on reflective practice, the child's progress and clear actions. Annual appraisals also prioritise staff development and are used effectively to plan ongoing professional development.

A comprehensive training programme provides staff with the opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills to meet the needs of the child. When required, staff undertake bespoke training that is specific to the emerging needs of the child.

Managers have strong working relationships with other professionals and there is clear communication and multi-agency working. The manager and staff attend

regular professionals' meetings to ensure that they are all working together to meet the needs of children. One social worker said, 'They do a wonderful job in supporting [child] and advocate for her to progress and move forward.'

The manager's internal monitoring systems are rigorous and ensure that the home's strengths are understood and areas for development are identified and actioned. However, the quality of external monthly monitoring reports fails to provide consistent and accurate oversight of safeguarding incidents and the actions taken.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	16 March 2026
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(f))	16 March 2026
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	16 March 2026

a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	16 March 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

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: SC025712

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Together Trust

Registered provider address: Together Trust Centre, Schools Hill, Cheadle SK8 1JE

Responsible individual: Sara Aldridge

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Amanda Ellis, Social Care Inspector

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