

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 charitable organisation. The home is registered to care for up to two children who may have emotional, social and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2016. The manager is also registered to manage another of the organisation's homes.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 December 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 6 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/07/2021	Full	Good
29/10/2019	Full	Good
11/09/2018	Full	Good
08/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

There are two children living in the home. Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home. When children move into the home, they are welcomed sensitively and with the best possible planning. Before any child moves into the home, the staff visit children and children come to visit the home so that they can meet the staff and other children. This helps to ease any anxieties that children may have. One child said: 'This helped me a lot. It made me worry less about moving.'

Children are registered with local health services and their health appointments are up to date. One child regularly takes part in sessions with an external specialist support service. This is having a positive effect on their emotional well-being. However, referrals to seek specialist support regarding self-injurious behaviour are not proactively requested by the manager. As a result, children do not always have access to the most appropriate services available to them.

Children living in the home can identify a trusted adult who they can speak to about any worries or concerns that they may have. Children are supported to build positive and trusting relationships with the adults that care for them. The staff know the children well and they invest time in them.

All children attend school, they are learning and making progress. The staff are ambitious for children. Staff understand the importance of education and how attending school regularly can benefit a child's social and emotional development. The manager and staff liaise with schools effectively. One child's teacher said: 'The manager and key worker are so attentive towards [Name of child]. They communicate all the time. Communication is excellent.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There have been occasions when children have had to be held to keep them safe. Not all records of restraint are reviewed effectively by the registered manager. They lack scrutiny and they do not take into consideration the effectiveness of the restraint used. The manager does not always speak to children following the use of restraint. As a result, children have not been able to express their feelings around their experiences of the restraints.

On most occasions, investigations into allegations are shared with the appropriate agencies and are handled fairly, quickly and in line with statutory guidance. One child had alleged that they were hurt during a restraint. The record of the restraint states that the child had later retracted the allegation. However, there is no record of the conversation with the child and information about the allegation was not shared with the appropriate agencies.

There are individual and up-to-date risk management plans in place for children. However, these do not always contain useful information from other relevant plans. As a result, staff are not provided with proactive strategies to ensure that they take effective action when risks have been identified. One child has a safety plan; this has been implemented by the child and adolescent mental health services. The plan provides staff with strategies to manage self-harm risks effectively. However, the plan is not routinely followed, which places children at risk of harm.

There have been occasions when children have displayed self-injurious behaviour. Records of these incidents are detailed and evidence what steps the staff have taken to support children when in crisis. However, the registered manager and staff do not always take effective action following incidents of self-injurious behaviour. As a result, children do not always receive the appropriate medical support and intervention.

The home makes use of a consequence and reward system. Children have received consequences for negative behaviour. In one record, a child received three separate consequences for one incident of negative behaviour; the consequences imposed were not relatable to the behaviour described. Consequences are not always subject to scrutiny by the manager. Therefore, consequences that are not fair, balanced or restorative in nature go unnoticed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Monitoring in the home is not effective. There are several significant incidents involving self-injurious behaviour and restraint that have not been reviewed effectively by the manager. Therefore, risks and concerns are not always identified through the manager's checks and evaluations. This prevents the manager from having a satisfactory level of oversight regarding the risks to children.

The manager completes a regular quality of care review. However, this review does not contain the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. This does not meet regulations.

There is a safe area report in place, and this is up to date. This takes into consideration the local risks and hazards. However, the manager has not consulted with relevant agencies, such as the local police, to obtain their views.

The home is properly staffed and resourced to meet the needs of the children. The staff team is small, stable and consistent. Because of this, the children can build secure relationships with staff. Recruitment processes are robust and staff are suitably vetted. The manager ensures that safer recruitment processes are followed.

Supervisions take place regularly and in line with the home's statement of purpose. Those who supervise staff are appropriately experienced and qualified to do so. Staff are provided with opportunities to reflect on their practice and the care that they

provide to children. Regular team meetings also take place, sometimes twice a month. These are also reflective and provide staff with opportunities to appropriately challenge practice.

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, 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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(c)) In particular, ensure that appropriate referrals to relevant health professionals are made on behalf of children who have displayed self-injurious behaviour.	8 February 2023
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	8 February 2023

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b)) In particular, seek appropriate advice and treatment when children display self-injurious behaviour. In particular, ensure that the children's individual risk management plans provide staff with clear strategies to manage and reduce risk, particularly around self-harm and the use of ligatures. In particular, ensure that risk management plans also take into consideration other relevant safety plans provided by external agencies to manage and mitigate risk. In particular, ensure that when children make allegations following the use of restraint, that safeguarding procedures are followed, and that conversations with children are documented.	
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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;	8 February 2023

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h)) In particular, ensure that significant incidents are evaluated with scrutiny, taking into consideration any possible learning outcomes that can be implemented within children's risk management plans, or to support the development of staff. In particular, ensure that there is effective oversight in the home, specifically with regard to the recording of significant incidents. In particular, ensure that incidents involving self-harm are recorded in accordance with the home's reporting and recording procedures.	
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, ensure that incidents of restraint are evaluated with scrutiny, taking into consideration any possible learning	8 February 2023

outcomes that can be implemented within children's risk management plans, or to support the development of staff. In particular, ensure that when consequences are used, they are subject to scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair, and that they are restorative in nature and not punitive.	
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, ensure that when completing a quality of care review, children's feedback must be taken into consideration and evidenced in the report.	8 February 2023
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)) In particular, ensure that relevant persons are consulted and their views are included when reviewing the location of the premises.	8 February 2023

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: The Together Trust Centre, Schools Hill, Cheadle SK8 1JE

Responsible individual: Jill Sheldrake

Registered manager: Lillian Adamson

Inspector

Kimmy Feeley, Social Care Inspector

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