

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 operated by a voluntary organisation. The home provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties or learning disabilities.

One child lived in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 July 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 19 and 20 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

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: outstanding

Staff in this home are exceptionally effective in meeting the complex needs of the child in their care. Staff are highly motivated and dedicated. They are committed to ensuring that they make a meaningful impact on the child's life experiences. The child is thriving and making phenomenal progress in all areas.

There is a culture of high expectations and achievement. The team, including clinical psychology and tuition support, has been tenacious and advocated for a bespoke, child-focused return to school plan. The team has worked tirelessly to ensure that the plan is centred on promoting the child's educational, social and emotional well-being. As a result, the child has made considerable educational progress.

The child has fun and has been sensitively encouraged to enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities. This includes go-karting, swimming, visits to the library, art galleries and museums. All achievements are celebrated and a number of awards are on display in the home. These opportunities and experiences have enabled the child to develop social confidence, a stronger self-esteem and positive relationships with the staff team.

Staff go over and above to actively promote and support the child to spend time with their family. They understand the importance of thorough planning and forward thinking in supporting the child with goodbyes. This approach has been extremely beneficial in helping to reduce the child's distress.

Staff benefit from specialist guidance and training. This supports staff to develop their understanding about the impact of the child's trauma history. Staff are attuned to the child's needs and consistently hold the child in mind when planning for all aspects of their care and support. This has been highly effective in promoting the child's sense of belonging.

Staff role model healthy relationships. This has successfully enabled the child to build secure and trusting relationships. The child can easily identify staff who they really enjoy spending time with and in whom they can confidently confide.

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

The manager ensures robust safeguarding practice. All staff are trained to recognise and respond to risks. This ensures that the child is kept safe. As a result, risks are significantly reducing. There have been no allegations or complaints. This indicates that the child is consistently well protected and content.

The child has a strong sense of feeling safe and secure?. Staff have persevered in supporting the child to build warm, trusting relationships. The child now has a voice and feels safe to express their wishes and feelings.

There have been no missing from home concerns. Staff spend time speaking with the child and helping them to understand risks and safe relationships. Staff are swift in appropriately sharing information with relevant professionals. This ensures that the team provides a coordinated safeguarding response.

Clear, consistent routines and boundaries provide the child with stability and security. Staff have empowered the child to overcome communication challenges. This means the child feels listened to, highly valued and exceptionally well cared for.

Staff promote positive behaviour and ensure consistent messages from the staff team. The child is supported to treat others with kindness and respect. Everyday experiences are used as a learning opportunity to address any prejudicial views and to promote equality.

Staff rarely hold the child, and on the very rare occasions that this has happened it has been as a last resort to keep the child safe. Effective monitoring systems ensure that any incidents are addressed and reflected on. Lessons learnt have helped staff to support the child in developing effective strategies to keep themselves safe.

Comprehensive safer recruitment procedures ensure that staff who work in the home are suitably qualified and safe to work with the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is experienced in providing high-quality care to children. An equally experienced and knowledgeable deputy manager supports her. Together, they ensure excellent standards of care.

Managers have a cohesive vision and passion for continuous improvement. This has fostered a positive and nurturing environment for the child and the staff team.

Partnership work is a strength of the manager and the staff team. The manager has built the highest-quality working relationships with professionals. All professionals said that she has the best interests of the child at heart.

The managers have an excellent oversight of the service. They have high standards of the staff and ambitious expectations of the child. Their aspirations and motivation have unquestionably made an exceptional difference and the child has made remarkable progress.

Staff receive regular supervision with opportunities to discuss their health and well-being, the child, and their own learning and development. The views of staff are taken into account and there is evidence of some reflective practice.

The manager has embedded a therapeutic approach to caring for children. Innovative training and clinical consultations support staff in their understanding of trauma-informed practice. Staff actively show loving, open, kind and nurturing care. The child's day-to-day needs are met to an exceedingly high standard.

Managers are well aware of the strengths and challenges of the home. They are proactive in addressing any shortfalls. The managers are tenacious in pursuing up-to-date plans for the child and escalating concerns where there are delays that could have a detrimental impact on the child.

Managers recognise the importance of plans that clearly and robustly identify the child's needs. This ensures that appropriate support is in place. Some records in the home, however, are not routinely updated to ensure that there is an accurate written account reflective of the child's current needs.

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

Recommendation

The registered person should ensure that children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

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

Inspectors

Paulette Forbes, Social Care Inspector
Amanda Ellis, Social Care Regulatory Manager

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