

SC025713

Registered provider: The Together Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or have a learning disability. The home is privately owned and managed.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 5 December 2018.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 January 2023

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: 15 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2022	Full	Outstanding
16/10/2019	Full	Good
19/12/2018	Full	Good
27/09/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Two children live in the home. The home is welcoming and comfortable. It is personalised to meet the needs of the children.

The children receive good-quality, individualised care that meets their needs. The staff build good relationships with the children. Staff know the children well and speak warmly and knowledgeably about them. One social worker said that the staff listen to the child and advocate for what is in their best interests.

The children are attending school regularly. There is good communication between the staff and education providers. One teacher said that the staff work well with the school and regularly share updates about the child's day. This means that the child can see trusted adults working together to support them to achieve their educational outcomes.

Staff support the children to see their family, and family members are welcome in the home. The staff maintain regular communication with parents and facilitate overnight stays for one child with a family member. One parent said that the staff are 'great' at keeping in touch. This helps the children to maintain their identity and continue to see the people who are important to them.

Careful planning and robust risk assessments mean that children have access to a range of positive experiences. Children enjoy sea cadets, cubs, swimming lessons, outings and holidays. This is helping the children to develop their confidence and social skills.

Staff support the children to maintain good physical health. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and attend all their health appointments.

Positive behaviour is promoted. Children are praised for this and receive incentives for doing well. Consequences are proportionate and fair.

Direct work is carried out with children on important issues, such as school, racism, bullying and family time. However, the records do not always include the children's views, their understanding of the issues and how the direct work will help them.

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

Assessments of risk and behaviour management plans are detailed and understood by staff. This ensures that staff take the right action when children go missing from the home. For example, staff work closely with the police and the placing authority and make every effort to contact and locate the child. Information disclosed when a child returns home is used to update the assessments and plans and to inform future responses.

Staff share information appropriately with other agencies to build a clearer picture of what is happening in a child's life and the actual risk to their safety. One social worker reported that the staff understand the risks for the child and will share and escalate their concerns appropriately. Staff seek advice and guidance from specialist professionals to help manage and reduce risk.

The children receive help and support to manage their behaviour and feelings safely. Staff provide them with emotional warmth and clear boundaries and expectations. However, the children would benefit from more focused support about how to keep themselves safe and make positive choices.

Restraints are proportionate and used as a last resort. The recordings of incidents of restraint are detailed and show a range of de-escalation strategies used in attempts to avoid the restraints. Staff and children receive a debrief after an incident.

Allegations against staff have been managed promptly and effectively. This means that the children are safeguarded from potentially unsafe adults.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. The manager promotes a nurturing environment and is passionate about obtaining positive outcomes for the children. The manager and assistant managers know the children well and are positive role models for staff and children.

Effective monitoring and review systems are in place. The managers understand what is working well and the areas for improvement. This means that the managers and staff can identify and act on shortfalls to improve the quality of care that the children receive.

Managers and staff receive training to develop the necessary skills and knowledge to understand and meet the children's individual needs. New staff coming into the home have received an appropriate induction.

Staff describe the managers as being supportive and say that they 'love' working in the home. There are regular team meetings which allow for feedback and discussion. Staff receive regular supervision, and records demonstrate that supervision is of good quality and gives staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice. This helps managers to gain a clear understanding of staff's strengths and areas for development.

The home is adequately staffed for the children currently living in the home. There is a stable core staff team in place and new staff are being recruited for the vacancies. When additional staff are required, bank and agency workers who have worked in the home before are often used, which helps to ensure consistency for the children.

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 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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Requirement 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)) This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that the staff support the children to learn how to keep themselves safe.	16 February 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's views, wishes and feelings are taken into account to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of their care. Children should also see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. The registered person must ensure that this is detailed in all children's records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

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: SC025713

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: Deborah Hinett

Inspector

Dawn Walker, Social Care Inspector

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