

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 two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is run and managed by a charitable organisation.

The home has a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 October 2019

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: 19 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/12/2018	Full	Good
27/09/2017	Full	Good
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/10/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from high-quality care from a fully committed staff team. Consequently, young people make progress from their initial starting points. One placing social worker reported, '[Name of young person] has formed positive relationships with staff who have offered consistent care and support alongside assisting him to develop age-appropriate independence. [Name of young person] has enjoyed a period of stability in his life since being here.'

Since the last inspection, two young people have moved on from the home. One young person has moved to semi-independence and the other to a placement more suitable to his needs. Both moves were well planned to ensure a smooth transition. Staff made each young person a DVD with photographs on it, so that they have a positive memory of their time living at the home. One young person sent a card when he left, with individual messages to each member of staff saying, 'Thanks for all the times you supported me,' 'I will miss you so much and I loved every second I spent with you,' and 'Thank you for always being there for me.'

Young people's health needs are well supported. Regular clinical consultation is provided to the staff team, which helps them to understand young people's complex behaviours. This ensures that staff can support young people's emotional well-being effectively.

Staff know young people well, listen to them and invest time in them. Key-working and individual consultation records show that a wide range of topics are discussed that relate to young people's day-to-day lives. Staff use the PACE principles of positive parenting to help young people overcome experiences of trauma. Over time, young people build trusted and secure relationships with staff. This provides them with a sense of permanence and belonging.

Staff have high aspirations for all young people. They challenge any barriers to a young person's learning and advocate on their behalf. Staff work well with educational professionals to support young people's attendance and participation in their education. Young people's choice of education provision is considered and where possible met. The organisation held an awards ceremony to celebrate young people's achievements during the summer.

Young people are supported to try new experiences and pursue their individual hobbies and interests. This enables them to make friends and socialise away from the home. Staff encourage young people to develop skills that help prepare them for independent living.

Young people live a warm and homely environment. A large extension is currently being built to the rear of the home. The building work is having minimal impact on young people. Young people's bedrooms have been personalised to reflect their own interests and styles.

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

Young people confirm that they feel safe in the home. Safeguarding training is regularly updated to ensure that staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities in promoting the welfare and safety of young people.

Young people respond well to clear and consistent boundaries. Staff are well trained in behaviour management. They use these skills effectively to respond to incidents of challenging behaviour. The use of sanctions and restraint is kept to a minimum as behaviour management focuses on negotiation and compromise.

There have been very few incidents of young people going missing from the home. Clear protocols are in place, and records provide an accurate picture of the action taken by staff to ensure the young person's prompt return.

Staff have a good understanding of young people's risks and vulnerabilities. Comprehensive risk assessments identify young people's risks and ensure, where possible, that they are kept safe. The home's locality risk assessment needs updating to reflect any potential risk from the railway bridge that is located close to the home.

The recruitment of staff is rigorous and prevents unsuitable people from being able to work with young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. She is very well supported by her management team. Together, they are highly motivated and aspirational in improving the lives of young people in their care.

A child-centred approach is fully embedded in the running of the home. Managers and staff work effectively with parents and professionals to ensure that young people receive the best support possible to meet their needs. A parent reported, 'I can't fault the home, [name] is like a new person since she has been at [name of the home]. The staff are brilliant, and they do great things with her. I couldn't be happier with her placement at the home.'

The home is well resourced and meeting the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose. The manager demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She makes effective use of both internal and external monitoring to ensure that high standards of care are maintained. The previous recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed.

The home is sufficiently staffed to meet the needs of the young people. Staff are qualified to level 3; one member of staff is currently undertaking their level 3 qualification. Staff access a range of mandatory and specialist training to ensure that they are equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of young people.

Staff are well supported by the management team. Staff use their supervision sessions, team meetings and clinical consultations to reflect on young people's progress. This ensures that the staff team remains motivated to deliver high-quality childcare. Annual appraisals challenge individual staff performance. However, not all appraisals include the views of young people to support staff development.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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, Cheshire SK8 1JE

Responsible individual: Jill Sheldrake

Registered manager: Deborah Ching

Inspector

Michelle Bacon: social care inspector

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