

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025713
Inspector	Louise Redfern
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	The Together Trust
Registered person address	The Together Trust Centre Schools Hill CHEADLE Cheshire SK8 1JE
Responsible individual	Jill Marie Bernadette Sheldrake
Registered manager	Tracey Margaret Sheer
Date of last inspection	25/02/2014

Inspection date	18/09/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
-------------------	--------------------

Outcomes achieved by young people living in this home are significant and are a result of exceptional care provided by the home. Education is a strong feature with staff effectively promoting full attendance and engagement by young people. Health needs are successfully met, resulting in improvements in the young people's physical and emotional well-being. Young people benefit from participation in a full range of activities which promote improvement in their social skills and confidence.

Young people's views are central to all aspects of the running of the home. Their relationships with staff are excellent. They feel very positive about the care they receive in the home and their contribution to care planning. They are safe in the home and confirm that they feel safe and secure. Staff promote positive behaviour and encourage young people to reflect on their behaviour where there are shortcomings.

The service is exceptionally well managed by a strong management team who strive to maintain high standards for young people. This is achieved through effective and rigorous monitoring of all aspects of the home's operations and a focus on continual improvement. The Registered Manager develops and maintains strong and effective links between agencies to ensure positive outcomes for young people are achieved. One professional commented, 'The manager is very receptive to joint working and

sharing information to keep young people safe.'

Full report

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and operated by a voluntary organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people with behavioural and emotional difficulties and or learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2014	Interim	good progress
25/09/2013	Full	good
22/01/2013	Interim	good progress
25/07/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people benefit from well-planned care which is highly personalised to their individual and specific need, whilst still supporting their sibling relationship. The Registered Manager and staff are extremely skilled at making and sustaining positive attachments which enhances young people's self-confidence and trust in their own abilities. Young people live in a home that is a nurturing and caring environment providing them with long term stability.

Young people are healthy and enjoy healthy lifestyles. They benefit from healthy diets and regular exercise through their recreational activities. Young people have recently joined a local gym which provides opportunity to develop their social interactions and live a healthy lifestyle. Staff ensure young people are registered with healthcare services and routine check-ups are up-to-date. Young people show an age appropriate understanding about healthy lifestyle choices. This means they do not engage in any risk taking behaviour.

Young people make exceptional progress in their attendance and achievements in education. They have continued to achieve excellent attendance in their individual educational placements. They have successfully transitioned into high school: this is because of clear planning and open communication. One educational professional commented, 'The staff have been very supportive, communication is excellent, X has now caught up with his peers.'

Staff consistently promote and support positive contact with the young peoples' parent and extended family members. For example, a large family gathering was arranged during the summer by the staff team. This meant the whole family were able to spend time together in a relaxed and safe environment providing a positive experience for the young people. A parent commented, 'The summer BBQ was great it meant the boys spent time with their older brothers and sisters.'

Young people are routinely involved in the running of the home. They are encouraged to participate in daily chores, including keeping their rooms tidy, caring for their guinea pigs, doing their own laundry, shopping and preparing meals. These opportunities allow young people to develop their skills at a pace suited to their individual needs. These skills provide a solid foundation to build on as they move towards independent living in the future.

Quality of care **outstanding**

Young people have developed extremely positive and meaningful relationships with staff. These relationships have significantly contributed to young people having a strong sense of belonging and emotional security. This has allowed for time for the young people to reflect on their family relationships and to plan for their future. One social worker commented, 'The placement is excellent; it has offered security through a nurturing environment; the staff team go above and beyond to make sure the boys continue to make positive progress.'

Young people's views are routinely sought and acted upon. There are ample opportunities for group, individual one to one discussions and service wide meetings. These forums provide opportunities for the young people to contribute to the running of the home and the organisation as a whole. The in-house discussions enable the young people to choose activities, plan menus, contribute to staff appraisals and changes to the home décor. The young people have requested and are currently planning for their first holiday abroad. They are aware how to complain but have not done so since being in placement. One of the young people reports that, 'I like it here, it's my home, the staff are great.'

Care planning and staff day to day practice recognises the young people as individuals, alongside supporting the development of their sibling relationship. Their needs are clearly outlined in young people's internal care plans which are regularly reviewed and frequently updated. Young people are fully involved in planning their care and regularly meet with keyworkers to discuss their progress and review their incentives. They are well supported to participate in relevant meetings and contribute to their looked after children review and as a result they are routinely involved in making decisions about their lives.

Staff promote young people's education . They work closely with educational professionals to ensure the young people are well supported and make progress. They attend school meetings, encourage homework, attend parent evenings and celebrate the individual educational achievements of the young people.

Young people are encouraged to engage in purposeful, risk assessed and age appropriate activities. This helps them develop their individual talents and interests and grow in confidence and become more socially adept. For example, the young people have joined the local gym and indoor rock climbing centre.

The young people live in a very comfortable home, which reflects their own identity. Family photographs are proudly displayed around the home alongside photographs of them enjoying activities in the local community.

Keeping children and young people safe **outstanding**

High staffing ratios ensure the young people are given the supervision and support they need to keep themselves safe. The young people are extremely positive about the care they receive and say they feel very safe living at the home. They say that bullying is not an issue and that they can talk to the staff about any concerns they have. Staff give young people's safety the highest priority. There are good safeguarding procedures in place for staff to follow in the event of any allegations, suspicion of abuse or unsafe practice.

Young people are very settled in the home. There has been one episode of missing from home since the last inspection. Detailed and robust risk assessments and effective links with the local police, ensured the safe and swift return of the young person. Staff consistently work with young people to reduce their risk taking behaviour.

Although young people are not currently at risk of child sexual exploitation, strong links have been forged with supporting external agencies. As a result, the young people are engaged in preventative work around staying safe in the community with specialist agencies underpinned by effective individual key work sessions. This means young people have a good understanding of risks associated with child sexual exploitation and staying safe.

Young people are protected from unsuitable people having access to them or working with them by robust staff recruitment and selection procedures and appropriate checks and monitoring of visitors while on site.

Young people's behaviour is sensitively and effectively managed. Staff are trained in behaviour management, including the use of physical restraint and make good use of their training to manage young people's complex and challenging behaviour. Staff know young people very well and they have developed an understanding of the factors that contribute to young people becoming anxious, frustrated or upset. As a result, the young people's behaviour has significantly improved and there have been few sanctions imposed and no physical interventions.

Young people live in a physically safe environment. They are well protected by a thorough range of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and routine checks. Young people and staff are regularly involved in fire drills, at different times of the day to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the home in the event of a fire.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The home's Registered Manager has been in post since November 2012 and secured registration in 2013. She is both suitable and experienced. She holds a level 4 qualification relevant to work with children and young people and in leadership and management. The Registered Manager is highly motivated and an enthusiastic leader

who is passionate about achieving excellent outcomes for young people living in the home.

The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose, which is sufficiently detailed and regularly updated. This ensures stakeholders are clear about the service and support provided by the home.

The operation of the home is well monitored. External independent monitoring processes complement the internal management systems. This ensures care practice and the conduct of the home is continually monitored and evaluated. Development plans in place evaluate areas of strengths and areas of development. This ensures young people's quality of care is continuously monitored. No areas for improvement were noted at the previous inspection.

Staff benefit from regular and individualised training to meet the needs of young people living at the home. The staff team are experienced and are suitably qualified. Regular supervision, appraisals and team meetings provide for consistency and ensures staff have the skills, knowledge and support to enable them to care effectively for vulnerable young people. One of the staff commented, 'I love my job, I am well supported by the manager and through good training. I feel we are making a difference to the young people's lives.'

The Registered Manager and staff have excellent working relationships with key professionals in other agencies. Educational and social work professionals comment positively on the frequent and good quality exchange and update of information. The home has a good relationship with the local community and neighbours: this is underpinned with strong links with the local neighbourhood policing team.

The quality of record keeping in the home is high. Records are up to date and stored securely. Records are easy to read and provide a narrative of the young person's life in the home. Young people see and discuss their plans which confirms the importance of their contribution to care planning. Significant events relating to the protection of young people are notified to the relevant authorities and appropriate action taken. This enables independent scrutiny of actions by the authorities in relation to serious incidents pertaining to young people.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.