

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 voluntary organisation.

A new manager registered with Ofsted in December 2018.

Inspection dates: 19 December 2018

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: 27 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2017	Full	Good
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/10/2016	Full	Good
17/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that relevant plans are in place for young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.1). This relates specifically to obtaining pathway plans for eligible care leavers.
- The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the employment of any temporary staff will not prevent children from receiving the continuity of care that they need. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 10.2).

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Care planning is completed exceptionally well, and practice is highly individualised to meet the specific needs of the young people at the home. Young people make positive and sustainable progress in relation to their individual starting points and benefit from consistency and stability in their lives. However, there have been staff changes since the last inspection which have impacted on some young people's ability to sustain their positive attachments.

Most young people enjoy positive relationships with staff and have developed a sense of permanence and belonging. They benefit from effective, high quality support that contributes to positive change and improvement in their lives. Young people are kept safe and have a strong sense of personal safety. A young person reported, 'It's like a family and it's not like a children's home. Staff are like parents to you'.

Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and have access to these services when they need them. Medical consent is in place and staff are clear about the types of health decisions and responsibilities that are charged and delegated to them. Staff work closely with health professionals to ensure that young people's specific health needs are consistently met.

Young people are involved in key decisions and there are effective arrangements to enable them to influence and contribute to the running of their home. Staff actively listen to young people and act on their reasonable requests. Young people know how to make a complaint and their complaints are addressed effectively.

Staff promote young people's independence and assist them to develop practical skills, in cooking, shopping and budgeting to promote their readiness for adulthood. This is done in accordance with young people's age, individual abilities and level of understanding.

Staff enable young people to take appropriate risks to promote their growth and natural development. A social worker reported, 'Alongside the pathway plan, staff have developed an independence plan that is individualised to [young person's] needs, to help him best develop appropriate self-care skills in a supportive environment...Staff are prepared to try different activities with the [young person] to build up his confidence'. While, this young person's pathway plan is in place, detailed pathway plans are not available in the home for all eligible young people.

Staff actively promote young people's specific interests and hobbies. Young people participate in positive and enjoyable activities, such as swimming, cinema, trampolining and camping, as well as various other social outings with staff.

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

Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of young people's specific needs and emerging vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them. There is evidence to show that young people become increasingly safer because of the actions staff take to support and protect them. The use of robust risk assessments and effective safe working practices promote the safety and well-being of young people. Young people's safety is consistently at the forefront of staff practice. Young people are kept safe and feel safe.

Staff have a good understanding of their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They are trained in child protection and are alert to the risk of harm. Staff ensure that young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Carers complete direct work with individual young people to ensure that young people know how to protect themselves and keep themselves safe. Staff encourage young people to think about their actions and the impact that their behaviour has on themselves and others. Consequently, young people are learning to self-regulate and modify their own behaviours.

Staff consistently have high expectations of young people's behaviour. They understand that young people can often struggle with their feelings and emotions and these can be communicated through their behaviour. Staff anticipate issues well and this enables them to act quickly to prevent incidents from escalating. Staff are trained to manage young people's behaviour safely and effectively. Diversion, redirection and de-escalation are common strategies used. The use of restraint is a last resort and is only ever used to protect young people from harm.

Positive behaviour is consistently praised, acknowledged and reinforced. Staff are fully supportive of each other and they respond effectively to young people experiencing high levels of anxiety or crisis. Staff spend quality time with the young people and provide effective support, advice and reassurance when young people need it most. Young people rarely go missing and on the rare occasions that they do, staff follow appropriate procedures and act to secure young people's quick and safe return. There have only been two isolated occasions when young people have gone missing or been absent since the last inspection.

The accommodation provided for young people is physically safe, appropriately secure, warm, comfortable and homely. Repairs are undertaken promptly, and staff ensure that the home is consistently maintained to a high-quality standard for young people. Health and safety is managed effectively, and this ensures that a safe environment is maintained for young people, visitors and staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new manager has been appointed since the last inspection. They have recently been registered with Ofsted and demonstrate strong and effective leadership of the operation of the home. The registered manager prioritises the needs of young people effectively. She has high aspirations for both young people and high expectations of the staff.

The home meets the aims and objectives as set out in the home's statement of purpose, delivering a high-quality service for young people. The registered manager has the full support and backing of her staff team and staff confirm that they are well managed, supported and led.

Sufficient numbers of suitably qualified, well-trained and experienced staff are employed to ensure that each young person's specific needs are appropriately met. Staff are committed and dedicated workers that strive to achieve the best outcomes possible for the young people. Staff share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in caring for young people. While the home can demonstrate the positive difference that the staff group have made to young people's lives, the issue of staff turnover remains a priority for the provider.

The registered manager is supported by an experienced deputy manager to ensure that the home is managed efficiently and effectively. They work well together as a management team and are ambitious and enthusiastic about securing continuing improvement. Development plans are in place and the performance of the home is independently scrutinised, each month, by an independent professional to review the home's arrangements to safeguard young people and promote their well-being. Leaders and managers act quickly to address any identified shortfalls and this enables them to have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. The registered manager makes effective use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to secure the home's improvement.

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

Anthony Kyem, social care inspector

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