

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	03/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC025744
Type of inspection	Interim
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 Sheldrake
Registered manager	Stephen Truelove
Inspector	Paul Scott

Inspection date	03/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Sustained effectiveness. Suitable effort has been made to address the requirement and three recommendations from the previous inspection. Permission for the independent visitor to access children's case records has been confirmed and is on file for all young people. The arrangements for staff supervision is clearly outlined in the home's Statement of Purpose, and procedures are now in place to ensure young people have the opportunity to be seen by an independent person following any episode of being reported missing. A range of systems have been developed to ensure the views of relevant people, including professionals, can be gathered and used as part of the staff appraisal process. The manager is aware of the need to embed these systems into practice at the point staff appraisals are due. The manager became registered with Ofsted shortly after the last inspection. He is experienced and qualified and has a good understanding of the home's strengths. He has clear ambitions to promote an improvement agenda. The home is managed in the best interests of young people. Young people benefit from the care and support of an experienced staff team who place their individual needs at the forefront of care planning and care practice. Staff know young people well and are responsive to the day-to-day management of their known and emerging behaviour, needs, risks and vulnerabilities. They proactively engage with parents and professionals to ensure each young person receives the right levels of support they need. For example, they have established strong working links with mental health professionals and have used these effectively to support young people who may be experiencing these types of problems including self-harm. This practice could be further strengthened by providing staff with formal training that will better equip them to deal with the emotional complexities of mental health and self-harming behaviour. There has been one admission since the last inspection. This young person was admitted from one of the organisations other homes and was thought to be a good match to the young people in placement at the time. This did not prove to be the case and resulted in an escalation in challenging behaviour over a very short period of time, which required police involvement on a small number of occasions. The	

manager was quick to identify these concerns and took action to review the suitability of the placement. Acknowledging that this was not the best place, he worked with the young person, staff and the placing authority to facilitate a positive move to another, better suited placement.

Care practice is underpinned by robust safeguarding policies and procedures. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in keeping young people safe and are diligent in their efforts to do so. Good working relationships have been established with a range of safeguarding agencies, including the police. This ensures consistent and transparent responses to the management of risky behaviour, allegations or safeguarding concerns. Processes are in place to ensure relevant agencies, including Ofsted are kept informed of any significant event and in the main these are followed. However, one safeguarding concern relating to complaints about police practice has not been notified to Ofsted, although it is acknowledged that safeguarding responses have been robust. There is also a need for the manager to keep Ofsted informed when a child protection enquiry has been concluded. Both of these issues are regarded as an oversight and have not had any impact on the care, safety or well-being of young people.

Information about this children's home

This children's home, is one of a number of homes operated by a charitable organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
25/04/2014	CH - Full	Good
16/08/2013	CH - Interim	Good Progress
17/05/2013	CH - Full	Good

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- The registered person must ensure that staff annual appraisals 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. (The Guide to the Quality Standards. Page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. This is with specific reference to ensuring that all staff promptly receive training in mental health and self-harm. (The Guide to the Quality Standards. Page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- The registered must notify Ofsted if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) and (e) occurs relating to any child living in the children's home and ensure that suitable updates are provided to the point of outcome using the online update service. (The Guide to the Quality Standards. Page 63, paragraph 14.10)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016