

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	3 October 2016
Unique reference number	SC025747
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Together Trust
Registered provider address	Schools Hill, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1JE

Responsible individual	Jill Sheldrake
Registered manager	Lillian Adamson
Inspector	Mark Kersh

Inspection date	3 October 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Not judged
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC025747

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home is evolving during a period of change, with a new manager and various staff changes. Leaders and managers have responded to this change positively and are working hard to embed new and consistent practice.
- Effective planning for admission enabled the young person to meet staff, visit the home and stay overnight before moving in. This foundation has allowed relationships to be built, strengthened and maintained.
- The young person has lived in the home for a short period, throughout this time as the sole occupant. This has led to him developing really positive and trusting relationships with all of the staff.
- The young person says that he likes living here and that he is settled. He presents as calm, happy and confident, and says that he knows that there is support here for him. The young person is making good choices about his safety and personal development.
- The young person benefits from highly personalised and nurturing care. The registered manager and staff aim to provide this as closely to that in a family home experience as they can. The young person is benefiting from this placement, as good attention is given to all aspects of his life, including education and developing a healthy lifestyle.
- Staff understand the emotional and complex needs of the young person. This enables them to support the young person through effective and consistent therapeutic support which promotes the young person's safety, well-being and progress.
- Detailed plans provide clarity and practical strategies to manage risks and enable staff to support the young person.
- Staff support the young person with his education and have good links to the organisation's own registered school and education providers. This ensures continuity in learning and promotes his academic abilities.
- The registered manager leads her team effectively and has the support of an assistant manager. They provide effective leadership to the staff team and ensure that they respond in a consistent way to meet the young person's needs.

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

Statutory requirement

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
16: Statement of purpose The registered person must— Keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions, and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	18/11/2016

Recommendation

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

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should detail the necessary management and staffing structure, the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the home's statement of purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2016	Interim	Not judged
17/03/2016	Interim	Not judged
23/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/08/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The home reopened in September 2016 following a period of refurbishment and staffing restructure. A new manager is now in post and she has implemented new systems and ensured full induction and training of new staff. As a result, the home is now fully operational and these new systems are embedded in practice. Careful consideration of referrals has taken place, enabling a planned admission to the home. The young person benefited from this planned introduction into the home, enabling him to meet staff and receive information about the services that the home provides. The young person has contributed to his care plan and has participated in planning meetings with his family and the staff. This has enabled a clear plan of care to be formulated and, although the young person has only been placed for a short period of time, he has made progress. The young person's overall experience and progress continue to be good, from his starting point in the home. He said: 'I'd like to say how much I feel supported in the home and how well staff are looking after me. They are helping me through a difficult period and I am very grateful for this.' The young person enjoys being with staff, who respond to him with warmth and good humour. As strong, trusting relationships develop, he is becoming more self-confident and comfortable in talking to staff about his concerns, thoughts and views, knowing that staff will pay attention and respond. He is happy and relaxed living in the home and, as a result, is responding very well to the agreed reduction in staff looking after him. Lone working is risk assessed. Staff have a good support network and are confident to seek advice or assistance, should they feel the need to. The manager and staff listen to the young person. They are sensitive and responsive, and maintain an open daily dialogue. This means that, even when the young person is not able to achieve what he wants, he understands the reasons why and learns to compromise or work steadily towards his objectives. Staff provide clear, consistent and appropriate boundaries. They fully recognise the young person's vulnerabilities and work effectively with a range of other professionals to ensure that needs are fully assessed and addressed. Detailed health plans are in place and show that the young person receives health services according to his needs. There is a strong focus on his emotional and psychological health and well-being. Staff work in partnership with the therapy team that delivers successful individual work programmes with the young person,	

group work with the staff and training. A therapist complimented how well the staff work alongside him in order to support the young person. She said that the staff 'go above and beyond' in supporting the work that her team carries out with the young person and his family.

The young person enjoys regular contact with his family and greatly benefits from this. Staff provide good emotional support and guidance to help to make sure that his family relationships, through regularly agreed contact visits, continue to be a positive experience for him.

Staff promote education and learning based on the previous attainment of the young person at school. Purposeful partnership working with the organisation's own school and education providers ensures that meetings agree educational plans to support the young person's continued learning. Daily tuition is provided to the young person, who is awaiting a school placement. This promotes learning and prevents educational delay.

Staff offer a variety of activities inside and outside of the home. The young person enjoys bowling, rock climbing, trips to the theatre and cinema. The young person is being supported to develop independence and life skills, completing basic household and shopping chores. The young person really enjoys cooking and baking, and this is supported by his staff.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The young person has become safer as a result of living in this home. There are detailed behaviour management and risk plans which are well implemented by the staff. The young person is involved in devising these strategies to reduce risks, identify vulnerable situations and change behaviours. Staff have completed all of their relevant safeguarding training and demonstrate well the procedures that they would follow, should a safeguarding concern be suspected. In addition, all staff have completed training on the intervention and planning using the 'good lives' model with young people. These measures significantly reduce risk and support the agreed plans of the young person. Staff have robust systems in place to manage and minimise risk factors associated with e-safety, with actions and outcomes detailing how to support the young person through education, guidance and support. This significantly reduces any potential for online bullying, exploitation, radicalisation, grooming or misuse of social media networks. The young person is confident that staff are there to support and protect him. He	

trusts the staff, and seeks guidance and support from them when he is worried or concerned. Formal complaint systems are in place. The young person knows how to use them and trusts that staff will treat complaints seriously. As a result, the young person has formal and informal opportunities to raise any matters in a transparent and trusting environment.

Behavioural management techniques are extremely effective and there is no use of restraint or sanctions. The young person responds well to the incentives agreed with him and is achieving all of his daily objectives. Staff are trained in behaviour management and know the procedure to follow in the event of an absence or missing from home incident. Trusting relationships, close supervision and communication have contributed to there being no incidents of the young person being absent or missing from the home.

This therapeutic and nurturing support relies on all staff understanding the specific emotional needs of the young person. There is a whole-team approach to applying the therapeutic ethos, by exploring with therapists the meaning of the young person's behaviour in the context of his past experiences. This enables staff to respond appropriately to the young person's emotional needs effectively. An important aspect of staff development is their self-awareness of how their own responses and attitudes affect the behaviour of others, particularly the young person. This is discussed regularly within the team, and provides staff with support and ensures a consistent approach to the young person.

The registered manager places great emphasis on ensuring that only those people suitable to work with young people are employed within the home. Recruitment and interviewing practices are thorough and well organised. For example, staff confirm that they were given scenarios and situations to consider as part of their interview, in order that their relevant skills, knowledge and understanding were assessed.

The home has been fully redecorated, and new furniture and fixtures purchased. This provides young people with a homely environment. All necessary health and safety checks, fire tests and evacuations are in place and recorded. All visitors to the home are required to show their identity and sign in. These arrangements protect young people, staff and visitors.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has been with this organisation for over 20 years. In this time, she has worked in residential children's homes, fostering services and been the registered manager at other homes. She was successful in her interview with Ofsted in April 2016 to be the registered manager of this home. She has the	

relevant experience and qualifications to manage the home.

The registered manager also has the responsibility of another home close by and is supported well by an assistant manager. Together, they have implemented changes and embedded new systems into the home. These systems fully support the work of the staff in meeting the needs of the young person. Staff receive regular supervision, training and development opportunities. Staff report that they feel supported by their managers, and that supervision and team meetings provide opportunities to reflect on practice and to improve their skills and knowledge.

Comprehensive induction and training programmes allow staff to perform their roles confidently and competently. Staff who have completed their probation period are qualified to the required level or are working towards the qualification within the required timescale.

The home's statement of purpose document clearly defines the ethos of the home. Staff know and understand the therapeutic model of care. This promotes a coherent staff approach to, and consistent boundaries for, the young person. Although the statement of purpose document has been recently revised and updated, it does not contain all of the information required by regulation. As a result, a requirement is made. This is to ensure that Ofsted is provided with an up-to-date statement of purpose document that reflects the staffing at the home and the training that staff have completed.

The home is sufficiently staffed to meet the needs of the current young person. However, the home has two vacant staff posts which are being recruited to. Although there are no current plans to accommodate another young person, the home does not have a workforce plan. As a result, a recommendation is made. This is to ensure that arrangements are in place and that staff are sufficient in number to meet any changing needs of the current young person or if another young person is accommodated. This is to enable the continued delivery of the home's statement of purpose document, in line with the home's registered numbers.

External monthly monitoring visits by an independent person involve discussions with staff, and consider the views of the young person and their progress in the home. Where shortfalls or areas for development are identified, the manager and independent visitor work closely together, developing appropriate action plans within the agreed timescales.

The management team undertakes regular audits of the young person's support plans and risk management plans, completing file checks to ensure that they guide staff effectively in all predictable eventualities. If young people are not making progress, then planning meetings are arranged to address and review plans with external professionals and parents.

Young people's case files are set up to reflect accurately their needs and clearly

define how they will be cared for, and the journey that they have made in the home since their starting point. The young person confirmed his contribution to his plans and that he has access to the information written about him.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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'.

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