

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025747
Inspector	Mark Kersh
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 Marie Bernadette Sheldrake
Registered manager	Louise Blyth
Date of last inspection	06/08/2014

Inspection date	23/02/2015
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None.

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

Following the last inspection, one recommendation is in the early stages of implementation. This relates to sufficient progress being made to demonstrate that the Registered Manager is taking robust action to ensure staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Clear lines of accountability have been defined. These arrangements provide the Registered Manager with more support and ensure that the staff are mostly effective in their delegated duties.

Fully addressing the other previous recommendation to develop young people's placement plans shows the Registered Manager is committed to improvement. Young people continue to make progress because person centred plans, recently introduced, are monitored and show positive outcomes young people have achieved. As a result, staff practice is focused on young people's individual identities, behavioural needs and plans for the future.

Since the last inspection, risk-taking behaviour has reduced. This improvement has been supported by a staff team that know young people well. Young people talk positively about their relationships with staff and with each other. Their behaviour has significantly improved from their starting point in this home and no incidents of physical intervention have taken place.

There have been few incidents where young people have gone missing. These have now reduced to zero as a result of staff support and young people understanding the risks within the local community. In addition, there has been minimal involvement with the police. This ensures young people are safe and they say they feel safe within this home.

Young people say they feel able to make complaints and have these addressed in an open and constructive manner. Records of all complaints are completed. However,

an incident record following an allegation against a staff member is incomplete. Although retracted the record for this allegation does not show a clear and comprehensive summary of how the allegation was resolved. This compromises the ability to reflect and learn when such incidents occur. This and other significant incidents have been notified to the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted within the required timescales.

Social workers are very satisfied with the care provided to young people. One commented, 'they are very comfortable in this home and school attendance is impressive, I have no issues about this home'. Another says, 'now a totally different child compared to their previous placement, risks have reduced significantly and they are being managed very well'.

Since the last inspection there has been a change of young people. Discharges have been undertaken successfully from the point of view of young people and social workers with staff continuing to provide support to some young people who have moved on. Admissions have been carefully considered and planned. Young people confirm they were able to visit this home prior to moving in and that they received information about the services the home provides.

Young people are positive about this home saying, 'I like it here and I want to stay at this home', and 'there are lots of activities and staff are kind and fun to be with'. Consultation with young people takes place weekly in their young people's meetings and a dedicated member of staff is also taking the opportunity to discuss any areas of concern with them. This ensures young people feel listened to and valued. The evidence to demonstrate these discussions are formally recorded and show actions taken of any suggestions made.

Young people have very good relationships with staff and receive one-to-one support. Some have regular attendance at school and others are being educated within the home until a suitable education provision can be found. Young people are clear about their programmes of activities and weekly planners and they continue to have regular contact with their families. These arrangements ensure young people's daily lives are structured and they know what is expected of them.

Young people live in a clean and warm environment and have personalised their own bedrooms to their preferred tastes. However, in places the home is looking tired and worn. Arrangements are in place to have parts of the home re-decorated and to make the environment look more homely.

The registered Manager monitors the quality of care provided by the home. Feedback from parents and external professionals is positive, in particular when referring to partnership working and this was confirmed by social workers spoken with. A complimentary letter from a placing authority team manager includes, 'I feel I must write to you to express my gratitude to you and your staff in the manner that you have supported our young people. To say that we are impressed with your hard

work would be an understatement’.

Two recommendations have been made at this inspection which relate to records following allegations made and the décor and environment of the home.

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home run by a charitable organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, physical disabilities and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/08/2014	Full	good
10/03/2014	Interim	good progress
08/01/2014	Full	good
04/03/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegation made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy is provided to the person as soon as the investigation is concluded (NMS 20.7)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. (NMS 10.3)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.