

SC025747

Registered provider: The Together Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home is registered to care for up to three children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities.

The registered manager has been in post since November 2015.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 October 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: 4 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/12/2017	Full	Good
22/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/10/2016	Full	Good
29/03/2016	Interim	Not judged

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

Recommendations

- Staff need to have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. If a child is not in line with their agreed targets or next steps, staff should seek expert advice from education professionals. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.11)

In particular, staff to ensure that they understand the academic level that young people are at and what their expected targets are.

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, the fire risk assessment should provide clarity on any action needed to maintain fire safety.

- All children's case records must be kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 32, paragraph 14.3)

In particular, placement plans should reflect the personalised care being provided to the young person, and action taken in respect of complaints made by young people should be clearly documented.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person enjoys positive relationships with staff. This is because the staff are naturally caring, warm and nurturing in their approach. As a result, the young person has developed a strong sense of belonging at the home.

The staff and managers take pride in the home. For example, one manager's insistence on there always being fresh flowers in the home and neat garden spaces outside reflects her insight into how these small touches make the young person feel well looked after.

With the support of staff, the young person has increased his levels of exercise and makes healthier food choices.

The staff support the young person to maintain contact with his loved ones. For example, staff provide transport for visits to the young person's parent, to ensure that contact can take place regularly.

The young person is attending school and making steady progress. The staff

communicate daily with the school to ensure that any required support is available without delay. Staff's knowledge of the young person's academic abilities is limited by their understanding of the national curriculum. This has the potential to limit their ability to understand the progress that he is making in school.

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

The staff are successful at managing the young person's behaviour. For example, staff use distraction and de-escalation techniques to good effect. As a result, physical interventions are not needed.

When safeguarding concerns arise, staff take swift and decisive action to address the immediate concerns. Following incidents, such as a young person's inappropriate use of the internet, staff utilise the support of partner agencies and specialist services to address the concerns. This reduces the likelihood of such behaviours occurring again.

The current young person has never gone missing. This is a reflection of how settled he is at the home. However, another young person who is no longer a resident had a significant pattern of incidents of going missing over a short period of time. Staff's response to this behaviour was good. Staff worked proactively to locate the young person and they made repeated visits to family members' houses and utilised the support of relevant stakeholders such as the police and the local authority.

The staff have good systems in place to review and monitor health and safety. This includes measures to maintain fire safety checks. Despite this, the fire risk assessment refers to an action plan which could not be located on the day of the inspection. The impact of this is low, as there are currently no identified shortfalls in respect of fire safety. Regular fire drills ensure that both staff and the young person understand what to do in the event of a fire.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and knowledgeable. The registered manager is supported by a leadership team that shares her motivation, enthusiasm and commitment. The collective approach of staff and managers ensures that the young person's needs are at the heart of everything that they do.

Since the last inspection, there have been some staff changes. There has been no noticeable impact upon the quality of care provided to the young person. Positively, the staff team is now stable, with a good mix of skills and experience.

Staff receive the necessary support and training in order to understand how best to meet the needs of the young person.

Although the quality of case records is generally good, there are some areas for development. For example, although the registered manager responds to young people's complaints appropriately, in one instance, the actions taken by the registered manager

following the receipt of a complaint were not sufficiently clear. Furthermore, although the young person's placement plan is detailed and reviewed regularly, it could better reflect the personalised care that is provided by staff. These administrative issues have had no impact for the young person, although they do have the potential to impact on the effectiveness of the registered manager's monitoring of the quality of care provided.

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: SC025747

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: Lillian Adamson

Inspector

Paul Robinson: social care inspector

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