

SC032565

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides residential short breaks for up to six children and young people with learning disabilities. The service is operated by a local authority.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 May 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: 1 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
03/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
18/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
18/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))	21/06/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	21/06/2018
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home. (Regulation 25 (1)(a))	21/06/2018
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46 (1))	21/06/2018

Recommendations

- Homes are required to develop and keep under review a "statement of purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule 1). The home's statement of purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the quality standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Outcomes for children and young people are good from their starting points. Children and young people enjoy socialising with their peers and having fun during their short break. One parent told the inspector, 'This is like a second home to him. He gets on with all the staff, and he is so happy when he knows when he is coming here.'

Children's and young people's healthcare needs are clearly identified within individual healthcare plans. Staff receive comprehensive training to enable them to support children and young people with complex needs. This includes the safe administration and recording of medication.

Although parents and carers are responsible for meeting their children's educational needs, there is a good relationship between education and care staff which ensures that there is a consistent approach between the home and education to support children and young people.

When children and young people have difficulties expressing their views and making their needs known, staff consult them by using a range of verbal, pictorial and signing communication methods. This enables children and young people to contribute their wishes and feelings regarding the care and support that they receive.

There are opportunities for children and young people to learn independence skills to prepare them for adulthood. Targets are set with each child or young person and their parent or carers. The staff then support each child and young person to focus on the targets to help them make real progress over time. A parent said, 'Staff have done so much work on his self-care. They get him to do far more than I ever could.'

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

Children and young people who have complex health needs enjoy their short breaks, because caring and knowledgeable staff help and protect them. Staff work with parents and professionals to identify risks carefully and to minimise them. Staff receive a good range of ongoing safeguarding training. Consequently, they have the knowledge to identify safeguarding risks and are quick to respond to any issues.

Risk assessments in place to safeguard the welfare of children and young people are not adequate. They include handwritten review dates, conflicting names of authors and are not routinely reviewed. This means that staff do not have a clear view of action to be taken or an up-to-date evaluation of the risks that children and young people face.

Staff have strong relationships with children and young people and they are proactive in effective redirection and de-escalation techniques in order to defuse potentially disruptive behaviours. Because of this, instances of physical intervention are rare.

Staff complete regular health and safety checks and follow a range of safety procedures to protect children and young people from potential hazards. These include fire drills to ensure that children and young people know what to do in the case of an emergency. However, a door leading to the laundry room does not meet fire regulations and requires replacing as recommended by the fire safety officer.

The home's procedures for vetting and recruiting staff are thorough. This helps to make sure that only suitable adults work there.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has an appropriately qualified registered manager in place. The manager has been in post since October 2013 and holds a level 4 national vocational qualification in leadership, health and social care.

Staff access a wide range of training which focuses on children's and young people's specific needs and vulnerabilities. The manager encourages continual staff progression. Consequently, staff have the confidence and knowledge to provide the specialist care that children and young people need. All staff are qualified for their roles.

The statement of purpose requires updating to include details that the home uses a keypad lock that releases in case of fire. This will provide parents and social workers with more accurate information about safety procedures in place for their children and young people.

There are gaps in the manager's monitoring and review systems which deplete his ability to refer to historic information. For example, the manager was unable to provide the inspector with details of admissions and discharges since the last inspection.

The registered manager and his staff team work in partnership with parents, social workers, education professionals and health services. This ensures that support is in place to assist children's and young people's progress and to maximise their potential. A parent told the inspector, 'Communication is great. I speak to the staff before and after each break, and I get a letter after each break, highlighting what he's done and how he has been.'

The manager has ensured that there is a review of the home's location assessment. The document highlights potential risks in the area but does not link the risks to the children or young people nor does it show what measures are in place to counter these risks. This means that potential risks in the area are not being assessed against children's and young people's welfare.

Suitable action has been taken to address one of the recommendations from the previous inspection. The manager now obtains and keeps a copy of his supervision records. However, the location risk assessment is still not a working document, so this

previous recommendation has now been raised as a requirement.

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: SC032565

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1HH

Responsible individual: Susan Hammersley

Registered manager: Robert Snape

Inspector

Dave Carrigan: social care inspector

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