

SC034849

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home is a short-breaks service for disabled children. It provides short breaks for up to three children over four nights each week from Thursday to Monday.

The registered manager has been registered since 12 March 2018.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 July 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/05/2017	Full	Good
23/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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
When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the independent person visits at a time when the independent person is able to see and to talk to children and observe the professional practice of the home's staff in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the home's care.	31/08/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy incredibly positive short breaks and they have fun. They clearly love coming to stay. Children are full of smiles when they arrive and make themselves at home in the warm and friendly atmosphere. Children get the chance to do things that they may not be able to do with their families, such as going to the beach and having fish and chips.

Staff are highly skilled in supporting and communicating with disabled children. They are knowledgeable about each child's needs and support plans. Staff provide children with a high standard of personalised care that helps them get the most out of their short

breaks. Staff support children to explore and feel comfortable in the world that they live in and to become more independent.

The manager and staff work very closely with the children's parents, social workers, teachers and health workers to make sure that the children's assessed needs are consistently met when they come to stay. Staff contact parents before children are due to stay to make sure that they have up-to-date information about the child. Staff also play an active role in meetings to review children's plans to make sure that the children are getting the right support.

The manager skilfully and carefully matches the children who stay at the same time. Children often stay with their friends and they enjoy the chance to socialise and do activities with their friends and other children.

The manager and staff make sure that disabled children have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected. Staff expertly support and encourage every child to express their wishes and feelings and to make choices about how they are supported, who they stay with and how they spend their time. The manager makes sure that children's views are acted on when they are in the child's best interest.

Staff think creatively about the best ways to get children's views based on each child's level of understanding and means of communication. For example, staff have used objects, such as buckets and spades and seashells, and photographs of animals and ice creams, to enable children to make meaningful choices about things that they want to do in the summer holidays.

The house is suitable to meet children's needs safely. Great care is taken to make sure that it is a comfortable and well-maintained place to stay. The house and garden provide children with a stimulating environment that meets their needs and interests. Before each stay, staff set up the bedrooms to reflect the character, interests and needs of individual children, so that they have familiar things around them and feel at home.

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

Children come to stay in a safe and supportive place. The daily routines and safeguarding arrangements protect children from harm and support their emotional well-being. The staff treat children with dignity and always make sure that children's intimate care needs are met sensitively. Parents are confident about leaving their children at the home because they know that their children receive a high quality of care.

Staff understand the vulnerabilities of disabled children. They continually assess the risks for each child and take considered and reasonable precautions to make sure children are protected.

Staff understand their responsibilities in protecting children. They are vigilant and professionally curious. The staff recognise changes in children's behaviour, the standard of care and/or appearance that may indicate that children may be at risk of abuse or neglect. The manager and staff take effective action when they have concerns about a child's welfare. They work well with parents, social workers and other key professionals to understand the risks to the child and to put suitable protective measures in place.

Staff use well-thought-out behaviour plans to create a consistent environment where children feel safe. These plans include details about agreed approaches for using restraint or restrictions of movement that are to be used daily. This includes changes to the physical environment, such as using key codes to open doors, to protect the child from harm. Likewise, children's plans set out when restraint must not be used with some children because of their medical needs.

The occasions when children feel upset and show aggressive behaviour are rare. Staff use their positive relationships with children to support them when they are feeling anxious or frustrated. Staff intervene calmly and confidently to help the child. They use distractions successfully, such as listening to music, watching a favourite television programme, going out to the garden or to the soft play or sensory room, to help the child to feel calm.

Staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to respond appropriately to children's medical needs, give basic first aid and treatment, help children to manage long-term conditions and to meet any health needs associated with a child's disability. Staff know what they must do if they have concerns about a child's health, including how to respond if a child has a seizure.

The arrangements for dealing with children's medication are safe and effective. Staff are suitably trained to make sure that children always get the medicines and treatment that they require. Staff carefully check with parents and doctors that they have the correct information about children's medication at the start of each stay.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager provides clear and highly effective leadership. She leads a caring, passionate and very competent staff team. Together, the manager and staff have created an extremely positive and aspirational culture that is improving the lives of disabled children. The manager and staff are ambitious for disabled children to enjoy every possible opportunity to broaden their experiences and fulfil their potential.

The manager has acted quickly to deal with the weaknesses found at the last inspection. This has led to improvements in the decoration and maintenance of children's bedrooms. Staff have developed their understanding of the home's policies and children's plans, and there is now an up-to-date plan of what staff need to do if a child goes missing.

The manager uses thorough and evaluative monitoring systems to understand the quality of care that children receive and to inform the development plan. She is introducing better systems for recording children's experiences, including using photographs, and measuring children's progress against set objectives. The manager has made a bid for capital funding to develop part of the house as a space to help older children prepare for adult life.

Well-planned staffing arrangements ensure that there are always enough knowledgeable, experienced, well-trained and qualified staff available to meet the children's needs. The staff work together cohesively. The day-to-day care of children is exceptionally well planned to provide them with the best possible support and

supervision.

The manager provides each member of staff with excellent support, guidance and encouragement. Staff use practice-related supervision and team meetings to reflect on children's progress and their professional practice. Staff also have regular opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills through training that is tailored to meet the needs of disabled children.

However, the person carrying out the independent scrutiny of the home is not visiting at times when children are there. This is a missed opportunity to see and talk to children about their experiences and to observe the quality of the staff's work with children.

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: SC034849

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Cheshire West & Chester Council, Council Offices, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port CH65 0BE

Responsible individual: Peter Tomlin

Registered manager: Sarah Pay

Inspector

Nick Veysey, social care inspector

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