

SC034849

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority and is registered to provide short-break care for up to six children who may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or sensory impairment.

Inspection date: 22 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 18 May 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has ceased working at the home and a new manager has been appointed. The new manager has submitted a registration application to Ofsted. The manager demonstrates a real passion and enthusiasm, and is very child-centred in her approach. Staff told the inspector that she was supportive and approachable.

The manager's appointment has coincided with a number of changes for the home, including a reduction in the number of days that the home is open. This has been unsettling for the staff team, as it has meant that there has been a reduction in the workforce. The impact for young people has been managed well, and those young people who stay at the home receive care from a consistent and familiar staff team.

Staff know young people well, and make the effort to show that they care, no matter how small it may appear. For example, feedback from one young person was that it made her happy that staff iron her clothes each day. Staff show a genuine pride and care for young people, talking with enthusiasm about young people's achievements. For example, one young person has learned to use cutlery to eat his meals. Staff support young people to make progress.

Young people enjoy spending time at the home. Feedback from one young person was that his only complaint was that he wanted to spend more time there. A local authority case worker told the inspector, 'You get feedback from mum that when she drops him off, he has a smile on his face.'

Staff have improved how they communicate with those young people who have limited verbal skills. For example, staff have now been trained to use Makaton and there are Makaton boards in communal spaces such as the lounge. This means that young people are better able to express their views and wishes.

Despite some recent decoration, some aspects of the home are in need of improvement and better maintenance. Staff told the inspector that they wanted the home to look and feel better. For example, one young person's bedroom smells of urine. This is because cleaning is no longer effective in dealing with the young person's persistent urination in his bedroom. Positively, staff have consulted with young people on how to decorate their bedrooms. However, there is a lack of clarity on when these planned improvements will be completed.

Staff have the skills to keep young people safe and respond effectively to young people's behaviours. As a result, young people are never physically restrained and there have been no incidents of young people going missing. However, for those young people who are identified as being at risk of going missing, staff do not plan how to respond to such situations. This means that there are missed opportunities to proactively consider how to reduce risks for some young people.

Of the seven recommendations raised at the last inspection, six have been completed. This means that staff now receive regular supervision, there is improved vetting of new staff and there is better consultation with young people, parents and professionals.

However, in some instances, the manager's monitoring and review systems have not been effective. For example, only three out of 12 staff have read the home's mandatory policies and procedures. Furthermore, the manager does not ensure that all staff have read key documents such as young people's risk assessments and short-break plans. This potentially means that staff may not have the knowledge to meet young people's needs consistently or to keep them safe. Notwithstanding this, staff are all well established and experienced and as a result, this shortfall has not had an obvious impact on the day-to-day care of young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/05/2017	Full	Good
23/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
17/03/2016	Interim	Improved 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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1) (2) (c) (i)) In particular, that young people's bedrooms should be maintained and decorated to both meet their individual needs and to promote their sense of belonging.	22/04/2018
12: The protection of children standard 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) and (2) (a) (i)) In particular, for those young people who are identified as being at risk of going missing, there should be individualised plans in place to respond to such incidents.	22/04/2018

13: The leadership and management standard 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— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (a) (b) (2) (c) (h)) In particular, the registered provider should ensure that all staff have read and understood all relevant policies and procedures. The manager should ensure that there are systems in place to ensure that staff have read and understood key documents including young people's risk assessments and short-break plans.	22/04/2018
--	-------------------

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 58 Nicholas Street, Chester CH1 2NP

Responsible individual: Peter Tomlin

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018