

SC049189

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for a maximum of three children and young people.

The home is part of a private social care company.

The registered manager has been in post since 2006.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 July 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: 29 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/05/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

09/02/2017

Interim

Improved effectiveness

06/10/2016

Full

Requires improvement

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. The registered manager should review all records of restraint kept in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role, formally appraised at least once annually. This relates specifically to the appraisal for the registered manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people have made and are making progress. They have strong relationships with the staff, who are nurturing and communicate in a consistent, open and honest way. One social worker described her young person's progress from the time he came to live in the home as 'substantial'.

In this home, the children and young people experience continuity of care from staff whom they trust and respect. The relationships between the staff, children and young people, families and professionals are strong.

The staff recognise and respond to the children and young people's unique personalities, encouraging them to develop their interests, make friends and have fun. With sensitive reassurance and support, children and young people are sustaining their friendships, enjoying social activities, building self-confidence and strengthening their resilience.

The children and young people's views and opinions are gained during regular house meetings and individual key-working sessions. Requests made by the children and young people are fed back to them and clearly recorded following staff meetings and their own key-working sessions. The children and young people benefit from this inclusive approach to the planning of their care.

Education is included in the children and young people's daily planners. All the children

and young people are in full-time school or college education and they have sustained excellent attendance. Where difficulties arise in finding an appropriate education placement for a child or young person, the registered manager works proactively with the placing authority. This supports interim arrangements and identifies a suitable education provision to prevent the child or young person from falling behind in their school work.

The staff support the children and young people to develop their skills and maintain optimum physical and emotional health. The staff are very aware of the children and young people's needs and personalities. The staff can talk to them about important issues, such as relationships and their future, at a pace that is individual to them. As a result, the children and young people are better prepared for adult life.

The registered manager has reflected on and improved the process for admissions. Referral information is now scrutinised and followed up to ensure that children and young people will be compatible with one another. When children and young people move on from the home in a planned or unplanned way, relationships with and support from the registered manager and staff continue to be available for the children and young people. These arrangements support any future placements and maintains the children and young people's sense of belonging. The registered manager and staff extend their high level of care and support to the children and young people's family members and their friends. This is because staff understand that a joined-up approach is essential to help maintain relationships. This support plays a part in enabling each child or young person to reach their full potential.

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

The children and young people told the inspector that they are settled, happy and feel safe in the home. The registered manager applies an effective safeguarding plan. Good, clear risk and behaviour management plans are in place and are individual to each child and young person.

This ensures that the staff know what strategies to follow, particularly if there are any concerns when the children and young people are away from the home with their friends or families. The staff respond to the children and young people's vulnerabilities in a consistent way, ensuring that the children and young people are protected.

The staff have received suitable training in safeguarding, and it continues to be a regular subject in supervision, team meetings and online modules. This support ensures that the staff fully understand their pivotal role in keeping the children and young people safe. The staff demonstrate well their understanding of safeguarding and managing risk.

The children and young people told the inspector that they always have someone with whom they can speak, if they have any concerns. The children and young people confirmed, and records show, that there have not been any complaints made since the last inspection.

There have been no episodes of the current children and young people going missing or being absent from the home. Records of the missing episodes or absences of previous children and young people show that there have been effective responses, including return home interviews for the children and young people. These records show that the staff are vigilant in their responses to missing incidents, and that they often locate the child or young person and transport them safely back to the home.

There have been no incidents of restraint with the current children and young people. Records completed since the last inspection show that three physical restraints were necessary to prevent serious harm or damage to property. The records completed by staff receive management oversight. However, one record did not reflect the registered manager's evaluation of the physical restraint. During the inspection, the registered manager took immediate action to rectify this shortfall. A recommendation is made to prevent any further occurrences of this oversight, in situations when the registered manager is absent from the home.

The registered manager ensures that there are effective arrangements for the health and safety of the children and young people, and staff and visitors. He delegates the application of these arrangements to staff members, and oversees their implementation. This includes appropriate routine monitoring of fire safety to ensure that the children and young people are safe and have a pleasant and stimulating environment in which to live.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The appropriately qualified manager has been the registered manager for this home since 2006. He and his equally well-qualified trainee manager are good role models for the staff team. The management team knows the children and young people, past and present, extremely well. Together, the manager and the trainee manager provide the necessary support for their staff, which enables the children and young people to make progress in the home.

The management team knows the home's strengths and weaknesses and work has previously been done, and is currently being carried out, to improve administration systems. The consideration of the children and young people's compatibility has been strengthened. And, better evidencing and analyses of data would improve the current work being carried out. This will then show the children's and young people's progress or areas for further support.

The registered manager reports a good level of support from senior staff within the organisation. However, his annual appraisal is overdue. As a result, his performance has not been recognised and his goals for further improvement have not been formally agreed.

The staff told the inspector that they receive a good level of support and feel that their

supervision is regular and worthwhile. Supervision records do not demonstrate this, as some dates when supervision has taken place have not been recorded. Recommendations for the registered manager's appraisal and staff supervision records are made at this inspection.

There are comprehensive internal monitoring systems to review the quality of care. The registered manager has good oversight of the work that the staff complete with the children and young people. Monthly external monitoring visits carried out by an independent person provide appropriate, constructive challenge for the registered manager to respond to.

The registered manager works well with families and professionals. This approach is central to the practice in the home and ensures that the service meets the aims and objectives contained in the statement of purpose.

Staff recruitment procedures are thorough in order to ensure that only suitable persons are employed at the home. A new staff member confirmed this process as part of his application for employment in the home. He confirmed that thorough checks were carried out prior to him commencing work in the home.

The recommendation made at the last interim inspection in relation to education has been met.

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: SC049189

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Registered provider address: Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road, Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Dave Edwards

Inspector

Mark Kersh: social care inspector

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