

SC065059

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by the local authority and offers care and accommodation for two young people who have experienced early childhood instability that has led to trauma and/or associated complex behaviours.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2018 and is qualified to the national vocational qualification level 4 in leadership and management for care services.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 17 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
20/06/2017	Full	Good
17/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/06/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive exceptional care from staff who are passionate about the young people and committed to understanding their individual needs. Because of this, young people make significant progress from their starting points in different aspects of their development, including their health, education, behaviour and self-esteem.

Both young people have lived at the home for over two years and enjoy trusting and nurturing relationships with the staff. Young people are extremely confident in the care that they receive. One young person told the inspector, 'We all live together as one happy family.' Another young person said, 'The best thing about the home is that the staff know and understand us so well.'

Care plans are highly personalised. Excellent multi-agency working means that all professionals work together. The staff clearly understand the aims of the placement plans and are aspirational for young people to achieve their goals.

Young people access all health services to meet their physical and emotional health needs. Young people engage in therapy sessions. The therapist visits the home regularly and holds consultation sessions with the staff. This support enables the staff to be better informed in how to best support the young people's emotional welfare.

Young people are making excellent progress in school and their work placements. One young person has already secured a college course for September. Another young person was nominated for apprentice of the year by her work placement. As a result, young people have high aspirations for their futures.

Staff support young people to maintain meaningful relationships with their families. Some young people have had increases in their time with their families because the existing arrangements have gone so well.

Staff support young people to take age-appropriate risks. As a result, young people are developing the essential life skills they need in readiness for adulthood.

The home environment is warm and cosy. Staff ensure that there are photographs displayed around the home that show shared activities and positive memories of young people's time at the home. Young people take pride in their bedrooms, enjoy their own personal space and have their own personal possessions.

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

Young people say that the support and nurture that they receive helps them to manage their emotions and become more responsible for their actions.

Highly effective care planning minimises the risks to young people's safety and well-being. Risks are clearly identified in young people's care plans. Staff understand, and use, the individual character of each young person to inform their practice and provide meaningful support. Staff engage young people in direct work relating to their own personal safety, which helps them to become increasingly safe.

Staff know the young people well and have excellent insight into triggers that might result in some challenging behaviour or a situation that the young person might not cope well with. The staff provide the young people with exceptional support and are effective in addressing patterns of negative behaviour. As a result of staff support, young people have developed skills that help them to cope with their anxieties.

Since the last inspection, there has been a reduction in the number of times that young people have gone missing from the home. In the event of a young person going missing, the staff follow well-established agreed local police protocols to ensure that the young person returns home safely.

There have been very few incidents that have required staff to hold or restrain young people. This is further evidence of the sustained progress young people have made in managing their own behaviour.

Young people live in a home that provides physical safety and security. Fire safety and health and safety checks are regularly carried out. Records show that young people and staff regularly practise evacuation of the building, so they know how to respond in an emergency or fire.

Safer recruitment practice ensures that adults employed to work at the home do not pose a risk to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed effectively. The manager is committed to delivering high-quality childcare that helps young people to achieve excellent outcomes.

Staff say that the manager is supportive and approachable and that there are good opportunities for training. The levels of training provided are high and all staff have received training pertinent to the young people in their care. This ensures that the service offered to young people is based on up-to-date knowledge. There is some evidence of research informing practice.

Staff receive regular, high-quality, meaningful supervision, which gives them the opportunity to reflect on and improve their practice. Staff receive regular feedback on their performance, and the culture of the home is one of openness. This helps to facilitate safe and professional practice.

The independent visitor consistently consults the young people, parents and social workers to ensure that their views are considered. The manager values external scrutiny

of the service and successfully addresses the areas of improvement raised within these reports.

The home has well-established links with a wide range of professionals and services involved in young people's lives. One social worker told the inspector, 'They are very proactive in sharing information and I have liaised with them a number of times.'

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: SC065059

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Registered provider address: Swann House, Boothten Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4SY

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Gareth Dawson

Inspector

Dave Carrigan, social care inspector

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