

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC356318
Inspector	Michelle Spruce
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Care Today (Children's Services) Ltd
Registered person address	Care Today Children's Services, Lansdowne House 85 Buxton Road STOCKPORT Cheshire SK2 6LR
Responsible individual	Vivien Anne Snape
Registered manager	Geoffrey Peck
Date of last inspection	07/01/2014

Inspection date	30/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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This is a good service with some outstanding features. The service provides excellent quality of care for young people. Outcomes improve regardless of the difficulties young people face. The key strengths are based in the dedicated commitment the manager and staff show in improving the lives of young people.

Young people generally feel safe in the home, regardless of the behaviour they exhibit. The home reflects a warm, nurturing environment where young people want to live. Relationships have gone from strength to strength and staff provide good role models for young people to learn from.

The manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the home and he continues to strive towards improvement. There were some shortfalls identified during the inspection and one requirement

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for two young people, of either sex with emotional, behavioural and learning difficulties. It is owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2014	Interim	good progress
22/08/2013	Full	outstanding
07/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
04/12/2012	Full	good

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
27 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall ensure that all persons employed by him receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal. (Regulation 27(4)(a))	31/12/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure a written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time, date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff,

including the registered person. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision (NMS 19.5)

- ensure the registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrences of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. The system includes what to do where a notifiable event arises at weekends (NMS 24.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people have a positive self-view about themselves. They know who they are and what they want to achieve. They take care of their appearance and demonstrate their identity through the clothes they choose to wear. Young people have a sense of pride and are well dressed and presented.

Young people know the importance of staying fit and well. Good healthy menus provide them with a nutritious diet that supports their well-being. Young people confirm they do not take part in risk taking behaviour and understand the risks they present. Health assessments are completed to ensure young people stay fit and well. Some young people are resistant to attending medical appointments but feel confident to seek help or support independently from external health agencies if they needed it.

Young people make good progress in attending education. Significant progress for some young people has been made considering their start point. Education documents made reference to a young person and commented, 'He has a full time programme; very positive attitude'. This shows young people enjoy learning and actively take part.

Young people form strong bonds with those who are significant in their lives. Overnight stays help young people to remain in close contact with family members while they are living at the home. As a result, young people work towards developing relationships that were once strained.

Young people make successful transitions into independence because independence is worked towards at a pace tailored to their own capabilities. Young people take responsibility for everyday tasks such as managing money, using public transport and cleaning the home. This embeds life skills into daily living and makes transition into independence smoother. As a result, young people leave care ready and skilled for adult life.

Quality of care

outstanding

The manager and staff undoubtedly have the best interest of young people at heart. They strive to meet each individuals needs regardless of the difficulties young people face. Clear and precise care plans assist staff to deliver excellent quality care, bespoke to each young person.

Staff continually support young people to gain trust and respect for each other. Some

young people have better relationships with staff and peers than others and relationships are often strained between staff and young people. This has not prevented staff from working to strengthen and develop good relationships despite the verbal and physical abuse shown towards them by some young people. As a result, the manager and staff re-enforce the importance of mutual respect by positive role modelling. This encourages more socially acceptable behaviour. As a result, relationships grow stronger.

Young people actively participate in sharing their views, wishes and feelings. Regular house meetings, key work sessions and reviews provide young people the opportunity to make their voice heard. For example, young people make decisions about what they would like to eat, where they would like to spend their leisure time and if they have any complaints. This enables young people to influence the care they receive.

The staff provides complaint forms, envelopes and a post box for young people to make complaints. Complaints received are responded to quickly and a response is sent to the young person with the outcome. As a result, young people know their concerns will be taken seriously and they feel listened to.

Young people live in a healthy nurturing environment. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle and are persistent in encouraging young people to attend routine health appointments. Despite young people often refusing to attend health appointments, staff do not give up, they continue to encourage and re-book appointments. This helps young people to understand the importance of taking responsibility for their own health.

Staff are dedicated in their approach to supporting young people's education. Staff work in partnership with other education services where young people fail to engage or attend education. Staff find imaginative ways to assist learning at a pace that is individual to the young person's need. For example, the manager used Lego to help a young person engage in a task where he had to build an item. This helped the young person to show his ability in concentrating on a task. As a result, he was able to engage for longer periods of time because his concentration had improved. Young people have access to a computer and educational material to assist their learning. As a result, young people continue to learn at a pace that is individual to them.

The home is welcoming, comfortable and well maintained. The home is within easy access to local amenities that young people can access independently. There are no identified community risks that impact negatively on the young people living at the home.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Young people feel safe because they know staff will take care of them. Episodes of missing from home are reducing because staff take prompt action to protect young people. Staff understand the triggers to behaviours that result in missing episodes. Strong links with the local police coupled with effective communication help to find and return young people quickly. This keeps young people safe.

Young people's behaviour is managed well because staff know the triggers that lead to negative outbursts of verbal or physical aggression. Staff are trained in the use of physical intervention. Effective behaviour support plans help young people to manage their behaviour more effectively. For example, rewards and praise are given out for acts of kindness or completion of targets. This helps young people develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Staff respect the privacy of young people and are polite and courteous in making sure they knock bedroom doors before entering. Young people have access to a telephone they can use in private to make calls to advocacy services. This ensures they can raise concerns in confidence without reference to staff.

Visitors to the home have their identification details checked before entering to make sure they are who they say they are. Staff are also vetted before they are able to begin work with young people. Checks are completed to prevent unsuitable candidates having access to vulnerable young people. This keeps them safe from harm.

The manager monitors the health and safety arrangements to make sure the home is compliant with regulation. Routine fire drills and equipment tests are completed so everyone knows what to do in the event of a fire. This keeps everyone living, working and visiting the home safe in the event of a fire.

Leadership and management

good

The service has a Registered Manager who has been in place since 2012. The manager is qualified to NVQ 4 leadership and management. Additionally, there is a committed staff team that support the operation of the home. There were no requirements or recommendations raised at the last inspection.

The manager has not received regular supervision or an annual appraisal in line with the company expectations. This means personal development is not maximised to the full potential. Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal to assist with their personal development. Supervision records do not routinely record the time that supervision has taken place even though the record has a designated place for this. This makes it difficult to know when staff are being supervised.

There have been a minimal number of significant events in the home that needed to be reported to Ofsted. Some notifications have not been sent in line with timescales

set out in regulations. This means any action required to be taken by Ofsted, in response to the notification, is delayed.

Core training is not routinely refreshed or updated. There were some significant gaps on the training records that reflect shortfalls in this area. For example, food hygiene, fire, and health and safety training for some staff has not been refreshed since they first received it more than a year ago. This means staff are not adequately provided with opportunities to refresh training. This means essential training opportunities are lost that assist their practice and development.

Monthly monitoring of the home is completed by an independent person. Young people are consulted about the quality of care they are receiving. Reports are routinely sent to Ofsted in line with guidance. The Manager also completes a detailed and well-informed review of the quality of care in line with Schedule 6. This keeps the service constantly under review and highlights where it needs to improve.

The Statement of Purpose is up-to-date and reflects the current arrangements of the service. Staff and social workers know and understand the ethos of the home and the service it offers. This ensures young people are provided with a service that can meet their needs.

Records are kept safe and secure. Confidential data is locked away in a locked office. This ensures only authorised personnel have access to it.

The home has a development plan that identifies how the home will continue to operate. The manager reviews the plan monthly to ensure the plan is meeting targets in line with timescales set. This helps to identify areas for improvement.

The home is beautifully furnished and decorated. It provides a welcoming, comfortable environment that young people have begun to appreciate and respect.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.