

SC381089

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority. It provides care for up to two children who may have emotional and social difficulties. The home is also registered to care for children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2024. The manager is also registered for another of the local authority's children's homes.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Both children spoke to the inspector.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 September 2025

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: 29 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/10/2024	Full	Good
29/01/2024	Full	Good
21/03/2023	Full	Good
31/08/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's experiences are positive, they have a sense of stability and they are making good progress. Children say they like the staff who care for them and that they are happy living in the home. Staff support children to live together and as a result, children have positive relationships with each other.

One child has moved out of the home since the last inspection. This was in line with their care plan. The move was well planned and done at the child's pace and taking their voice into consideration. The child was involved in the planning and encouraged to participate in meetings about their move. Staff promoted a positive ending for the child and remain in contact with them, which is testament to the positive relationships between the child and staff.

Children moving into the home are welcomed sensitively. Good planning before children come to live at the home ensures the manager carefully considers the children's vulnerabilities and that all children's needs can be met. For example, one child visited before they moved in, had a sleepover and were supported by staff to purchase items for their room. This helps children to feel comfortable in their surroundings and develop a sense of belonging.

Staff promote clear and consistent boundaries. Children have routines in place appropriate to their age. Staff support children to prepare for adult life by developing their independence, learning new skills and enabling them to take age-appropriate risks. The routines are individual, flexible and purposeful and consider the children's strengths and vulnerabilities.

Staff help children to engage with their education and both children are making progress. Staff talk proudly about the children and their achievements. Their encouragement has been effective in engaging one child, who previously experienced challenges with school attendance. Staff challenge education providers to ensure that children achieve positive outcomes and enable them to fulfil their aspirations. As a result, both children have recently started college, to further their education.

Children are in good health and access local health services as needed. When children have specific health needs, training is provided to staff to ensure they can provide appropriate care. Staff talk to the children and encourage an open culture of discussion around their health, so they understand their own health needs.

Children's views are listened to by staff and the manager. Children have lots of opportunities to have their say, through general chats, reflective discussions and direct-work sessions. This allows the children to share and talk about their achievements and reflect on events and provides valuable experiences for children to learn how to

communicate and listen effectively. As a result, children feel valued, and they grow in confidence.

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

Children have trusting relationships with the staff, which is a significant protective factor for them. Staff know the children well and understand their needs. These trusting relationships enable children to feel safe and secure in the home. Children are supported to understand risk and how to keep themselves safe, and staff support the children effectively to take balanced and age-appropriate risks. Since the last inspection, there have been no missing-from-home episodes.

Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities. There are clear risk assessments and behaviour support plans in place. The plans are kept under regular review, and any changes are communicated to staff to ensure that they have up-to-date information to promote the children's safety and well-being effectively.

Staff encourage positive behaviour. Praise offered to children contributes towards their pride, self-esteem and independence. There is minimal use of consequences. However, when needed, natural consequences help children to learn from behaviours. Staff reflect with the children on any consequences to ensure that they understand the reasons why they were implemented.

There have been no incidents of physical intervention since the last inspection. Staff have access to external clinical and therapeutic support. Clinicians and staff work together to learn from children's previous experiences, triggers and presenting behaviours to help them understand what approaches will suit children's individual needs. This provides staff with considerable insight into the children's responses to situations. As a result, staff are able to offer support and reassurance to children, which helps them remain settled.

Children's health needs are understood, and medication is safely stored. However, one child's medication record is not up to date. While this has not impacted on the child's safety, the manager acknowledges there is a need for medication records to be up to date and accurate to ensure there is no impact on children's health or well-being.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager's approach is child centred, and the children's well-being is central to his practice. He has a comprehensive knowledge of the children and the progress they have achieved since living in the home. The manager understands the home's strengths and areas for improvement. Monitoring systems have improved since the last inspection and enable the manager to oversee the quality of care in the home.

There is a dedicated staff team in place, which has helped the children to build secure relationships with staff and experience continuity of care. There is good and consistent feedback from the staff, who enjoy working in the home and feel supported by the

manager. The staff work well together, have positive attitudes and are enthusiastic about their roles. Consequently, staff morale is good.

Team meetings and consultations with the external clinical team take place regularly and are used as a time for reflection and learning. Staff are given the opportunity to discuss children's care plans, day-to-day arrangements in the home and their roles and responsibilities. These discussions enable staff to have further insight into the children's individual needs and responses to situations.

The manager and staff have positive and effective relationships with the children's professional networks. Feedback from external professionals is positive. One said that the staff go above and beyond to provide safe, supportive and trauma-responsive support to the children. This helps to create a sense of safety and security for the children, which is evident in how settled they both are in their home.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date. In particular, they should ensure that children's medication records are up to date. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC381089

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Floor 2, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1HH

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Paul Barker

Inspector

Julia Thompson, Social Care Inspector

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