

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 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 July 2016 and holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 March 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: 4 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/09/2018	Full	Good
08/03/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/05/2017	Full	Good
09/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people make exceptional progress in all areas of their lives as a result of living in the home.

The standard of assessment of young people's needs and care planning is exceptionally high. Staff carry out detailed assessments of the young people's emotional, psychological and physical health needs. Staff then use this information to develop highly individualised care plans that set out clear strategies for everyone to follow in order to meet all young people's individual needs. This results in the young people receiving consistent and well-planned care.

One of the most positive features of this home is the strength of the relationships that the manager and staff have with the young people. These relationships have played an important part in supporting young people through some difficult and challenging periods. As a result of these strong relationships, young people have learned to trust and respect the adults who care for them.

Staff give priority to young people's physical, emotional and mental health. Young people are appropriately registered with health services. Staff have established excellent joint working with specialist therapeutic services so that young people receive the help that they need. In addition, staff receive monthly sessions with the organisation's therapists to support them to develop strategies that improve the emotional well-being of young people.

All young people have appropriate school placements that reflect their educational needs. Young people who have previously found it challenging to engage in education now have very good school attendance and their progress is beyond original expectations. One young person is now a school ambassador and has represented the school in different cities across Europe as well as receiving the headteachers 'most-improved student' award. These are exceptional achievements for a young person whose attendance prior to living at the home was 37%.

Staff support young people to maintain and rebuild relationships with their families. For some young people, contact with their families has increased.

Staff ensure that young people benefit from a wide range of social, educational and recreational activities. Each young person is encouraged and supported to pursue their own interests. All young people can participate in community clubs and groups, such as girl guides or youth clubs, that provide opportunities for widening their social networks.

The physical environment of the home is homely and comfortable. There are lots of photographs of the young people proudly displayed throughout the home, which show young people having fun on holidays or engaging in varied activities.

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

Safeguarding is a standing agenda item in team meetings and is discussed during the staff's individual supervision sessions. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting young people. Managers and staff maintain highly effective relationships with the local police and safeguarding agencies. This well-established professional network means that young people receive a high level of support that reflects their needs and vulnerabilities.

Staff are committed to ensuring that young people are safe. Risk-management plans are thorough and regularly reviewed so that they remain current.

Staff understand each young person's individual triggers and behaviours very well. They take prompt action to support young people to manage their emotions in a constructive manner. A strength of the home is the cohesiveness of the staff team and the consistency in its implementation of behaviour management strategies.

Young people engage well in one-to-one meetings with staff. These meetings focus on identifying and prioritising areas of need and risk, based on ongoing assessment and review. Consequently, staff support young people to improve their behaviour and discuss any worries.

The manager makes sure that young people live in a home that provides the highest levels of physical safety and security. Health and safety checks are regularly carried out. Records show that young people and staff regularly practise evacuation of the building, so that they know how to respond in an emergency. The home has established systems and structures in place for maintaining safe practices and fulfilling health and safety obligations.

The recruitment systems which are in place ensure the careful selection and vetting of suitable staff. This helps to prevent unsuitable adults from working with young people. Visitors are appropriately checked for identification prior to them entering the home. This protects young people from unsafe people who may wish to cause them harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led and managed effectively by an extremely committed and experienced manager. He is supported by a deputy. They are passionate about improving the lives of the young people at the home, and have high aspirations for them. They inspire the staff to be equally passionate and committed to the young people who they care for.

The training and development of staff are given high priority, and ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to support young people effectively and promote positive outcomes. The appraisal and supervision process that is used

to manage staff performance ensures that they understand their roles, have clear objectives and are provided with training to support young people's progress and achievements. Most staff are qualified to level 3 or higher and those who have not attained this qualification are on course to do so within regulatory timescales.

The manager has implemented excellent monitoring systems, which include regular audits, seeking feedback from young people and acting on their wishes and feelings. This drives continual improvement in the home and helps young people to feel valued.

The manager and his staff have developed excellent relationships with a variety of partners, including parents, social workers, education services and the police. These relationships ensure that young people have the optimum support to develop well in all areas of their lives. A teacher reported, 'I would like to comment on the great working relationship that we have with all the staff in the home. We have daily contact with a staff member and we work in collaboration to support the young person's needs both academically and emotionally.'

The manager challenges others when the service is not of a standard the manager or staff expect. The manager is an excellent advocate for young people.

In response to the one requirement made at the last inspection. The quality of care review now contains the views of young people.

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 address: Swann House, Boothen Road, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4SY

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Christopher Whalley

Inspector

Dave Carrigan, Social Care Inspector

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