

SC381089

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A local authority operates the home. The home only supports young people from the local authority's area.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 May 2017

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: 9 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive all the help and support they need to make good progress emotionally, physically and socially.

- Young people are given every encouragement to keep in contact with their family and friends.
- The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision, undertake annual appraisals and complete regular training to enable them to provide good quality care.
- Young people are involved in the running of the home and have good opportunities to have their wishes and views heard.
- Staff are positive in their approach to education and its value for young people's progress.
- Young people are encouraged by staff to take part in leisure activities in the community.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Managers have not ensured that staff have sufficient knowledge of the home's whistleblowing policy.
- Managers have not ensured that risk assessments are up to date.
- The lounge is showing signs of wear and tear and requires updating.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
03/02/2016	Full	Requires improvement
13/10/2015	Full	Inadequate

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
6: The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(2)(c)(i))	15/07/2017
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that ensures staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(c))	15/07/2017

Recommendation

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them by means of appropriate recording. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The relationships between young people and staff are good. Young people receive care from an experienced and committed staff team. A social work manager told the inspector, 'She has settled well and appears to have good relationships with staff.'

Young people are at the centre of the home's daily routines. Staff make sure that young people have access to a full range of social opportunities and experiences. Staff provide personalised care that takes account of young people's individual needs. As a result, young people increase in confidence as their achievements are acknowledged

and celebrated.

Young people have clear health plans and are registered with the relevant primary healthcare services. Young people have access to specialist, therapeutic input provided by the authority. There are good links with specialised services, such as mental health services. This means that young people receive specialist input that is tailored to meet individual needs.

Young people's school attendance is good. When issues do arise in school, the staff are proactive in helping young people address the issues, so that any disruption to their education is minimal.

Young people are fully involved in day-to-day decisions. Young people have regular one-to-ones and daily communication with staff. This helps to ensure that young people have ownership of decisions made in the home. Young people told the inspector that they know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy. This shows that young people know their rights and are confident in exercising them.

Young people are given every encouragement to keep in contact with their family. This includes the staff being ready to give practical support to make this contact possible.

Young people make good progress in developing basic life skills, which are appropriate to their age and understanding. Young people are provided with opportunities to develop new skills, such as shopping and cooking, with good support and encouragement from staff. This helps young people develop the practical skills they need in readiness for adulthood.

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

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practice. Staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and particular vulnerabilities that help to keep young people safe. However, some risk assessments are not up to date.

Staff use incentives to influence good behaviour and young people confirm that they like this system.

Young people rarely go missing from this home. Any unauthorised absences are short and used as opportunities to educate young people about personal safety. A social work manager told the inspector, 'I have no concerns whatsoever in respect of the home.'

Young people live in a home that provides a safe and secure environment. Staff complete regular health and safety checks and follow a range of safety procedures to protect young people from potential hazards. These includes fire drills, to ensure that young people know what to do in case of an emergency.

Staff are aware of risks associated with social media and are mindful of young people's vulnerabilities to child sexual exploitation and potential radicalisation.

Young people are protected by the local authority's recruitment practice. Staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. These procedures promote the safety of young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

The manager ensures that the home is generally kept to a good standard. Young people take pride in their bedrooms and have personalised them. However, some areas in the home are showing signs of wear and tear. This includes the decoration and fittings in the lounge area. This does not ensure that the young people's home is well furnished throughout to meet their needs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has an appropriately qualified registered manager in place. The manager has been in post since June 2016 and holds a diploma in leadership, health and social care at level 5. Most staff are qualified. Those who are unqualified are within regulatory timescales at present to obtain their qualification within two years of starting work.

Staff feel that they receive good support and guidance from the manager. They receive regular supervision and appraisal. All staff complete a range of mandatory training, refresher courses and training in particular areas, such as restorative resolution and self-harm. This ensures that staff keep their skills and knowledge up to date. However, not all staff are familiar with the home's whistleblowing policy, which means that staff are not fully aware of how to raise any concerns about the workplace.

The manager ensures that the home operates in line with its aims and objectives, as set out in the statement of purpose. The statement of purpose highlights the level of service provided, including giving clear information to stakeholders about the care and support that young people can expect to receive. The home's children's guide is appropriate for the young people in placement and includes useful contact numbers.

The manager ensures that communication between agencies is prompt and effective in ensuring that all parties are regularly updated on young people's progress. A social work manager said, 'The communication has always been excellent. Staff keep the social work team up to date with any incidents and progress made.' This means that young people receive a multi-agency response to meet their specific needs.

The manager has taken action to address the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. The manager has ensured that any restraint used is necessary and proportionate, improvements have been made in relation to the recording of restraints and the manager's review of care now captures the views of young people and other agencies.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC381089

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Susan Hammersley

Registered manager: Christopher Whalley

Inspector

Dave Carrigan, social care inspector

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