

SC387784

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 supports young people aged between 10 and 17 years old. The home offers care and accommodation for up to two young people. A local authority operates the home. The home only supports children from the local authority's area. The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2018.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 February 2019

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: 23 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2018	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/11/2016	Full	Good
30/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(xi))	10/03/2019

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one young person has left the home to live independently. One young person has moved into the home, who is the sibling of the young person currently in placement. The manager considered carefully professionals' views before the young person moved in. This information was used to inform an initial impact risk assessment which identified the appropriateness of the placement in meeting both young people's needs. The assessment also helped to identify actions that may be needed to reduce any risk-taking behaviour.

The new young person's reviewing officer told the inspector, 'I can honestly say that since being at the home, I can see for myself that, amongst other things, [name of the young person] has made huge progress, especially in relation to his self-confidence and development of his social skills.'

Care plans reflect young people's individual needs and how staff will meet them. These are reviewed regularly, which helps to ensure that young people are getting support based on their current needs and risks.

Young people have clear health plans and are registered with the relevant primary healthcare services. Staff receive guidance from relevant professionals to support their work with individual young people to facilitate implementation of agreed strategies and support. This provides continuity for each young person. Medication is stored safely, and records are maintained on the administration of medication.

All young people are engaged in education and benefit from support to promote their educational achievement. All young people have good school attendance at their respective education provisions. Their educational achievements are positive, considering both their attainment and progress from their starting points. Additionally, staff support and encourage young people to complete homework and to access activities to support their overall educational attainment.

Family contact is promoted and there is a clear understanding of the importance of this for both young people. One parent told the inspector, 'The staff have been great, they have supported me with contact arrangements that has really helped. I cannot thank them enough'. This was validated by a reviewing officer, who told the inspector, 'Carers promote, encourage and support family contact, so much so that Dad is encouraged to visit the boys in placement.'

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

Staff understand young people's vulnerabilities and the risks that some behaviours may pose to their welfare and safety. Good levels of supervision and support, alongside good-quality risk assessments, are used to protect young people and minimise the risk of harm.

Staff receive safeguarding training that is regularly refreshed. They have a good understanding of their duties in promoting young people's welfare. They understand the procedures to follow in relation to safeguarding concerns and allegations. This reinforces the safety and protection of young people living in the home.

Some members of staff's response to young people's challenging behaviour has not been consistent, and not all staff members are as confident or competent in dealing with some behaviours displayed by young people. For example, some staff members have locked themselves in the staff office as a de-escalation technique. This does not give a consistent, positive message to the young people.

Staff take health and safety seriously in the home, and this helps to keep young people safe. Equipment and installations are serviced as required. Fire safety tests are carried out as required and young people and staff take part in regular fire drills.

Young people are protected by the local authority's recruitment practice. This means that only adults deemed suitable and safe are employed to care for young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has an appropriately qualified registered manager in place. The manager has been in post since January 2018 and holds a level 4 national vocational qualification in leadership, health and social care.

Staff receive regular supervision and annual performance appraisal, and report that this supports their practice. Most staff are qualified to a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. Those who are unqualified are in the regulatory period to obtain their qualification. Training opportunities, in addition to the mandatory training, are good. This helps to ensure that staff are supported in developing their practice over time.

The manager uses weekly team meetings to ensure that everyone is up to date about how to promote and protect the young people's safety. A psychologist who works with the authority attends team meetings, which enables staff to reflect on any incidents of significance and how they can learn from them. This means that learning is captured from significant incidents, which enables staff to learn and develop greater skills in their role.

Suitable action has been taken to address the recommendation from the previous inspection. The statement of purpose document has been updated and now accurately describes the service.

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: SC387784

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Gareth Dawson

Inspector

Dave Carrigan, social care inspector

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