

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	12/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC387784
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Stoke on Trent City Council
Registered person address	City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST4 1HH

Responsible individual	Susan Hammersley
Registered manager	Helen Malanaphy
Inspector	Matt Hedges

Inspection date	12/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC387784

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people receive individualised care from a consistent, knowledgeable and caring staff team.
- Young people make progress because of the support they receive.
- Risks are well understood and effectively managed. This helps young people to be safer.
- Staff take robust action when young people go missing.
- Staff help young people to develop their independence skills effectively.
- The registered manager has developed strong monitoring systems; she has good oversight of the care provided and drives improvement.
- The registered manager has developed good links with a range of other agencies/professionals and uses these effectively to improve the service offered to young people.
- Records of 'sanctions' lack sufficient detail. This is largely an administrative issue.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes a description of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) (iv))	12/02/2016
The registered person must within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) (vii))	12/02/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional/behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a Local Authority and only provides care and accommodation for young people living in their area.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/11/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
04/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good progress
31/07/13	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people benefit from individualised care provided by an experienced and stable staff team. Staff develop good relationships with young people who are positive about the support they received. One young person stating, 'staff are the best thing about living here'. This adds to the quality of their day-to-day experiences of living in the home. Parents also talk positively about the home, one stating, 'staff are brilliant.' Young people make progress in key areas of their lives because of the support they receive. For some, education attendance, work ethic, and attainment improve. Education providers are positive about the support staff offer, describing the home as, 'really good'. Other young people make good progress in relation to their behaviour and their emotional well-being. These improvements help young people to achieve more and feel safer. Staff help young people to develop good independence skills essential for later life. They balance this skilfully with the need to keep young people safe and understand the risks that increasing independence can bring. As a result, young people are better prepared for their lives as adults. Young people who move from the home feel reassured that they will continue to receive the support of staff. One young person stating, 'I know that they will still be there for me'. Young people who have previously lived at the home confirm this explaining how they still like to pop in for lunch. This helps young people take steps towards adult life with increased confidence and a greater feeling of security. Young people's views significantly affect the support they receive. A young person confirms this highlighting, 'it was my decision to move to the home...I am fully involved in my care plan and in choosing my education'. This empowers young people and further develops their confidence and their independence.	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are clear that they generally feel safe in the home; however, some are reflective that at times they put themselves at risk when they go out. These risks include going missing. In some instances, this also puts them at risk of child sexual exploitation. Staff are knowledgeable in these areas. Risks are well understood and are proactively managed. This helps young people to become increasingly safe. Staff respond well when young people go missing. They actively search for them and engage effectively with partner organisations including the police. One professional reflects, 'they are on it immediately, they go the extra mile to support young people.' Family members also talk positively in this regard, a parent explaining, 'they do everything they can and keep me well informed'. Young people at risk of child sexual exploitation are well supported. Staff educate young people and develop clear strategies with them. This equips them with an awareness of the risks they face and helps them think about how to reduce these. Young people know what they can expect from staff and understand why they are worried about them. They confirm this stating, 'I know why they do what they do...I may not always like it if I am not in the right mood, but I do understand it'. This helps young people to feel more secure and lets them know they are cared for. Staff offer sensitive, effective support to young people who self-harm. They seek advice from partner organisations and use this to improve their practice. Incidents are monitored to identify patterns and trends in an attempt to address issues as proactively as possible. This ensures young people receive a calm and consistent approach. Clear, consistent boundaries help young people to improve their behaviour. Staff ensure that this is celebrated and rewarded. On occasion, 'sanctions' are used in response to negative behaviour. These are proportionate and are often agreed with young people in advance. However, records are poor. On one occasion, staff did not record a significant 'sanction'. This limits the information available to young people who may wish to re-visit incidents in the future. It also prevents effective oversight and exploration by other professionals. In addition, staff fail to record the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. This reduces the opportunities staff have to reflect on their practice and the impact it has on young people. A new recruitment system ensures all staff are appropriately vetted. This is a significant improvement and helps to protect young people from potentially unsafe adults.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager who has been in post since 2010. She has developed good relationships with families and a wide range of agencies and uses these links effectively to support young people. She is highly respected by other professionals who comment positively about her. For example, one professional describes her as a, 'dedicated manager who works hard to achieve the best outcomes for the young people'. These relationships are strengthened by robust challenge when agencies fail to meet young people's needs. An education professional reflects on the progress a young person has made and states, 'this is in no small part down to the tenacious and principled support provided, and how well the registered manager has advocated for them. She has ensured that other professionals are appropriately supported and challenged to understand and met the young person's needs.' This improves the support young people receive and helps them to achieve more. The registered manager has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has addressed the one recommendation made at the last inspection. As a result, staff left in sole charge of the home have all successfully completed their probationary period. This ensures young people receive high quality care consistently. The registered manager has implemented improved monitoring and review systems and uses these effectively to identify and address weaknesses, drive improvement, and ensure that the home achieves the aims and objectives outlined in its statement of purpose. Young people's progress is tracked, which enables her to ensure that they continue to make progress from their starting points. Staff are well trained and well supported. They talk enthusiastically about their work and the support they receive. One member of staff commenting, 'I am very proud of the team and the management that support us.'	

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016