

SC387784

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home is registered to provide care for up to two children who may experience emotional and social difficulties.

The registered manager is suitably qualified.

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

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 February 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: 5 December 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2023	Full	Good
07/03/2023	Full	Good
07/09/2021	Full	Good
07/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, one child has moved into the home and one child has moved out of the home to live independently. Staff create bespoke plans that help children to feel supported during their moves and to understand the arrangements. Staff keep in contact with children when they move out. This helps children to feel safer in the community and to feel valued by staff.

Children have positive and trusting relationships with staff. Staff support and encourage children to share their views, wishes and feelings. This helps children to feel confident in the support they receive from staff. Staff support children to share their views with external professionals. For example, one child is a member of a children's rights group, and another child was supported by staff to advocate for independent living.

Staff encourage children to develop their independence skills. They help children to learn practical skills and how to support their mental health. This helps children to live safely in the community and to identify future support. Staff help children to develop their employment skills as part of their independence. For example, one child is due to commence a work placement at a garden centre.

Children are supported by staff to access full-time education and employment. One child is in school, and another child is taking part in a college and work experience programme. Staff are strong advocates for children when they experience challenges with education. This helps external professionals to understand children's needs.

The home has a comfortable lounge area where children enjoy relaxing and speaking to staff. The children's bedrooms reflect their personal interests. There is a well-maintained garden where children enjoy having barbecues in the summer. There are plans for a new kitchen to be fitted. The manager recognises that there are areas of the home that need to be redecorated and that this is an area for development.

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

Children have detailed support plans that are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff support children to share their views, wishes and feelings regarding their plans. This helps children to be involved in making decisions about their future care. For example, one child was supported by staff to share their views with their social worker about living independently.

Staff are supported by a psychologist to understand children's lived experiences. This helps staff to identify the support children need. When children need additional support, staff are creative in helping children to receive this. For example, staff arranged for one child to receive support from a drugs service alongside their peers. This helps children to receive bespoke care and protection.

Physical interventions are only used by staff if this is necessary to keep children safe. There has been one physical intervention used since the last inspection. Staff support children to explore their feelings when they are feeling unsettled. This creates a nurturing living environment that helps children to feel confident in sharing their feelings.

Children are supported by staff to learn about internet safety. This helps children to understand the risks of social media and gaming. Staff support children to share any experiences of bullying by their peers. When this occurs, staff are proactive in supporting children to have the opportunity to speak to external professionals about their experiences. This helps children to feel confident that staff will keep them safe.

Staff support children to understand the risks in the community. For example, staff supported one child to understand the risks of knife crime. This resulted in the child no longer carrying knives and being safer. Staff support children to understand the risks of going missing. This helps children to reflect on their experiences and to understand how to live safely in the community

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and staff team are strong advocates for children. This is reflected by the positive feedback from external professionals. The manager and staff team are experienced and dedicated to providing children with safe opportunities to achieve their ambitions. They are committed to supporting children when they leave. This provides children with positive role models.

Staff speak positively about the support they receive from leaders and managers. Detailed training plans, reflective supervision and team meetings support staff to develop their practice. Staff value the consultation meetings with the psychologist. This helps to develop their emotional resilience in supporting children.

Leaders and managers are committed to safe recruitment of staff. This helps to identify safe adults to care for children. The manager understands the importance of there being a diverse staff group. This helps children to be cared for by adults who reflect their individual diversity.

The manager has effective monitoring systems in place. These help her to review the progress of children's experiences and staff practice. The manager is developing an audit tool to monitor all communication with external professionals. This is helping the manager to monitor how professionals are working together to support children.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home provides a nurturing, supportive and homely environment that meets the needs of the children. The home must comply with relevant health and safety legislations; however, in doing so, the home should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. This relates to decoration of the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC387784

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

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

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Stacey Hegarty

Inspector

Siân Heffey, Social Care Inspector

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