

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 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: 23 to 24 January 2018

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 March 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:

- Children and young people are positive about the care and support they receive, and feel safe and comfortable in the home.
- Staff work closely with family members to encourage, promote and support family contact.
- Children's and young people's views and opinions are regularly sought, to promote their participation in the running of the home.
- Staff support children's and young people's learning through close partnership working with schools.
- Young people approaching adulthood receive help from staff so that they can develop essential life skills.
- The manager provides staff with ongoing support, supervision and training that reflect children and young people's needs.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager has not made sure that the home's statement of purpose contains all of the required relevant information.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/11/2016	Full	Good
30/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/01/2016	Full	Good

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.

Recommendations

- The Statement of Purpose is of particular importance to this Standard (regulation 6(2)(a) and (b)(i)). Homes are required to develop and keep under review a "Statement of Purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule 1). The home's statement of purpose should be child-focused, indicating how the home provides individualised care to meet the Quality Standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people benefit from good-quality care that contributes to them making good progress in many aspects of their lives. This is because the staff place children's and young people's individual needs at the centre of their work.

Relationships between the children, young people and staff are warm and caring, and all interactions are extremely engaging. Children and young people are clearly at ease with staff, and appear to be settled in their home. One young person told the inspector, 'The staff here are amazing because they treat you like their own family.'

Staff support the health of children and young people. Staff work well with local health professionals to make sure that children and young people know how to access health appointments, and can obtain the treatment and health advice they need, including sexual healthcare and other specialist support. The arrangements for the storage and administration of children's and young people's medication are safe and effective.

The staff greatly value education, and make sure that children and young people receive support and encouragement so that they can make progress in their learning. A teacher said, 'Staff fully support the young person and will always either attend the school or contact us if there is an issue.'

Children and young people are supported to keep in contact with their families and friends. This is working well, and some of the children and young people have been able

to make significant improvements in the quality and quantity of their family contact arrangements.

Children and young people make good progress in developing independence skills which are appropriate to their age and understanding. Staff work in partnership with parents and professionals to prepare plans which are supportive of the young people's needs. For example, one young person has recently spent some time living independently in the local authority's training flat, with the support of staff. This means that young people are confident when they leave the home, and have a greater understanding of all the aspects of independent living.

Staff encourage children and young people to make a positive contribution to the home. Children and young people contribute their views through one-to-one working with staff, and more formal meetings. Children and young people are encouraged to join local clubs and take part in activities within the community. This enables children and young people to develop confidence, integrate with different friendship groups, and enjoy a real sense of achievement.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of the children and young people in their care. There are clear procedures for reporting and managing safeguarding concerns and staff have a good understanding of these processes.

Staff use well-thought-out behaviour management strategies, along with the quality of their relationships with the children and young people, to defuse and manage challenging situations. This positive approach is proving to be effective, and has contributed to a reduction in the number of restraints used. When restraint is used, there is good management oversight of staff practice so that it can be monitored and evaluated.

Children and young people rarely go missing from this home. Staff encourage children and young people to let them know where they will be and when they will be home. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of the joint police and local safeguarding protocol to follow when a child or young person goes missing from home.

The accommodation provided for children and young people is physically safe and appropriately secure. There are effective health and safety systems in place. Regular practice evacuations take place to make sure that children and young people know how to exit the building safely and quickly in case of an emergency.

The staff recruitment and selection process is thorough. Managers do not confirm any new staff appointments until all checks have been completed. These measures positively promote the safety of the children and young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has an appropriately qualified registered manager in place. The manager has been in post since November 2017, and holds a level 4 national vocational qualification in leadership, health and social care.

The staff team is stable and well established. All staff have gained, or are working towards, the required level 3 diploma qualification within regulatory timescales. Staff receive regular supervision and benefit from a range of appropriate training opportunities that develop their knowledge, skills and professional practice. This makes sure that staff remain competent to look after children and young people.

The home's statement of purpose has recently been reviewed, and sets out the aims and objectives of the service. However, the document does not give full details of the services provided for children and young people in the home. For example, details of the restrictions placed on children's and young people's internet use in the home are not included.

External monitoring of the home is undertaken each month by the independent visitor, and is effective in identifying strengths in the home, as well as development points. The independent visitor consults with children, young people and professionals to make sure that their views are taken into account when plans are made for developing the service.

Positive relationships exist with other professionals, families and the local police. This makes sure that multi-agency support is provided for children and young people in order to promote their progress. A placing social worker said, 'Communication is really good. I receive weekly updates and regular phone contact. They know her very well and provide good support.'

Suitable action has been taken to address the requirement and recommendations from the previous inspection. Recording of restraints and consequences has improved and there is now more informed use of restraint and risk assessment.

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 ST4 1HH

Responsible individual: Susan Hammersley

Registered manager: Gareth Dawson

Inspector

Dave Carrigan: social care inspector

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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding 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 1231, 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 <http://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 <http://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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018