

SC408369

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority. It offers care and accommodation for up to two children who have experienced early childhood trauma.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since September 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 June 2021

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: 3 September 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/09/2019	Full	Good
08/05/2018	Full	Good
02/05/2017	Full	Good
22/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are two children currently living at the home.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, staff have worked hard to ensure that children's schooling has been maintained. Consequently, children have achieved excellent school attendance and academic success.

Children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms in line with their wishes. This gives children a sense of belonging. Children's achievements are proudly displayed throughout the home, which helps to create a homely atmosphere. However, some aspects of the home do not create a nurturing environment. For example, there is a potential ligature risk in the lounge, and a padlock is being used to keep a cupboard locked.

As COVID-19 restrictions have been lifted, staff have ensured that children have benefited from a range of social and recreational activities. For example, children have been able to go on trips to the beach and walks. As a result, children have had the opportunities to socialise.

Staff hold key-work sessions with the children. These sessions cover a range of topics, including sexual health, internet safety and managing emotions and anxieties. Consequently, children feel listened to and valued and make safer decisions.

Staff access support from the in-house therapeutic service. This support helps staff to have a better understanding of children's vulnerabilities.

Staff work with health professionals to ensure that children have access to the right support and advice in relation to their physical and emotional health. However, staff have not ensured that one child has had the right access to specialised health services. This has created a delay in the child accessing the right help.

Staff offer children an appropriate level of affection and praise. This helps children to develop positive relationships with staff. However, staff occasionally miss opportunities to support children to safely explore their emotions. This can compromise children's stability.

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

Children feel safe and are aware that staff care about their well-being.

The registered manager ensures that staff are thoroughly vetted before they start to work with children. As a result, children are safeguarded from unsuitable adults working with them.

When children go missing from the home, staff take prompt action. Staff follow children's missing-from-care protocols and work closely with the police. This coordinated approach helps to keep children safe.

Staff understand children's individual risk assessments. These documents are detailed and provide clear guidance for staff to follow. As a result, staff are equipped with the essential control measures that to help to keep children safe.

Staff have a good understanding of de-escalation techniques that help them to manage challenging behaviours. Consequently, physical intervention is rarely used. Physical restraint records are detailed and contain all the required information. This means that controls used by staff are regularly reviewed to ensure that practice is proportionate and safe.

Staff continually encourage children to take part in regular fire evacuations to ensure that they know what to do in an emergency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is ambitious and passionate about providing a good quality of care to the children. She works closely with professionals, and feedback is positive. These partnerships mean that children are protected, feel secure and know that everyone has their best interests at heart.

The registered manager promotes equality and diversity. For example, the registered manager triggers discussions with the staff about children's identity and sexual orientation. Consequently, staff have a good understanding of equality and diversity.

The registered manager holds monthly meetings with the staff. These meetings consider the individual needs of the children and provide staff with the opportunity to learn from each other.

Most of the staff hold a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. However, there are gaps in some members of staff receiving their refresher training in first aid, fire safety, food hygiene and health and safety. This delay has the potential to compromise the staff's ability to update their knowledge.

Despite the positive aspects of care, not all staff receive regular practice-related and reflective supervision. For example, several members of staff have not received supervision in line with the home's statement of purpose. This creates a missed opportunity to help staff to discuss their performance and to develop their practice.

The registered manager does not always use monitoring and review systems well enough to help her to have a good level of oversight of the home. For example, the fire risk assessment is not up to date. This oversight has the potential to place children at harm.

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 behaviours and positive responses to other children and adults In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; strive to gain each child's respect and trust (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(viii)) This particularly refers to staff helping children to explore their emotions.	30 July 2021
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individuals performs. (Regulation 32 (1) (2) (3)(b)) This particularly refers to the registered manager ensuring that all staff receive their required mandatory training.	30 July 2021

The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that all staff receive regular supervision.	30 July 2021
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all children receive support to access services for their health and well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered person should ensure that potential ligature risks and lock on cupboard are removed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that adequate precautions against the risk of fire are in place and that the fire risk assessment is kept up to date. ('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: SC408369

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City of Stoke-on-Trent, Swann House, Boothem Road, Stoke-On-Trent, Staffordshire ST4 4SY

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Medan Case-Peart

Inspector

Patrick McIntosh, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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