

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 and is registered to provide care for up to two children who experience social and emotional difficulties because of early childhood trauma.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2020.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2023

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: 24 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2022	Full	Good
22/06/2021	Full	Good
03/09/2019	Full	Good
08/05/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Three children have moved out of the home during this inspection period. The manager ensures that children move into the home in a planned way. All three children who moved out of the home had a positive experience and left the home in line with their local authority care plan.

The manager and staff work well with children who are subject to a deprivation of liberty order. The support available to children is enabling them to make positive progress from their starting point.

All children speak positively about living in the home and about the adults who look after them. One child told the inspector, 'Staff help me more than they know. I am different now as I no longer do the things I used to do, because I don't want to let staff down.' Children have built strong relationships with the adults who care for them. This helps children to feel safe and relaxed in their surroundings.

The manager and staff are committed to supporting children to achieve good educational outcomes. They work in partnership with schools and the placing authority to find children a suitable provision that reflects their learning needs. One child has attained seven GCSE qualifications. This support helps children to grow in confidence and provides them with a better opportunity to reach their full potential.

Staff sensitively support and encourage children with their identity and have skilfully supported children with issues around their gender identity, sexuality and culture. Staff seek specialist help when necessary and have carried out research to meet the needs of the children they care for. Staff and children have an inclusive attitude and celebrate diversity. Children are encouraged to celebrate their identity. As a result, children show greater tolerance towards each other and there is no bullying in the home. The managers and staff encourage and celebrate children's achievements. This helps children to feel a sense of pride and belonging.

The manager has a good understanding of children's health needs. Medication practices are safe. However, one child has not visited the dentist within timescales in line with their healthcare plan.

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

Staff are clear about their responsibilities to protect children. Staff understand the child protection policy and know how to report a safeguarding concern. The manager has an effective system in place for recording, reporting and monitoring safeguarding concerns. Liaison with professionals, such as the local authority designated officer and social workers, is effective. Information is shared swiftly with them to avoid delay and ensure that children are protected from harm. The manager

takes guidance from these professionals, and they work together to ensure that children are safe. Safeguarding records are comprehensive and detail the outcome of any concern and actions for staff to follow.

Children have behaviour management plans. Staff use de-escalation techniques in line with children's individual needs and plans to support children. As a result, there have been no incidents of restraint. The staff work well with children so that children understand behaviour that may present a risk to them. This work has supported children to become increasingly safe.

Staff educate children around risks. Children take part in key-work sessions and engage in meetings where safeguarding scenarios are discussed to address identified risks and raise their awareness about topics of concern. This direct work includes safety in the community, drugs, alcohol, identity and well-being. This positive work enhances children's knowledge of risk and allows them to take the lead in their learning.

The manager and staff have a good understanding of children's individual needs and risks. Children's risk assessments are detailed and clear. However, staff do not consistently follow children's plans on actions they should take when children are missing from the home. Although children have not suffered harm on these occasions, this practice does not safeguard children effectively.

The manager and staff ensure that the home environment is safe for children to live in. A range of health and safety checks are carried out to assess whether there are any hazards which could pose a risk to children. Children take part in fire drills to ensure that they know how to safely evacuate the home in case of such an emergency. However, the inspector found a fire door propped open, which does not comply with safety regulations. The manager took prompt action during the inspection to rectify this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A suitably qualified and experienced manager leads the team. The manager has good knowledge of children's starting points and what they have accomplished since living at the home. She is fully involved in children's lives. She is clear about the progress children are making and has high aspirations for what they can achieve. The manager is enthusiastic in her efforts to be a trusted person for children. This makes her a good role model for staff.

The manager has good oversight of the home. Effective auditing tools are utilised which produce action plans to develop the staff's practice further and promote consistency in the home.

Staff feel supported by the managers and morale is good. When issues are identified, staff say they feel supported by leaders to address these effectively. As a result, staff feel equipped to support children, and they enjoy working in the home.

Staff are provided with a wide range of training that informs their practice and meets the children's individual and diverse needs. Team meetings and supervision sessions take place monthly and are used as a place for reflection and learning. Important issues are tracked and discussed, and children are at the centre of all practice. For example, team meetings have focused on ensuring that recordings appropriately reflect children's pronouns, and language is sensitive to children's identity.

The manager has established good connections with partner agencies. Professionals are positive about the communication with the staff team and about the care provided to the children. One social worker told the inspector, 'The home communicated well and share information to help me to make the best decision for the child.'

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This particularly relates to the registered manager ensuring that staff understand and follow children's risk assessments and plans.	31 December 2023
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(a) (2)(a)(iii)) This specifically relates to the registered manager ensuring that children attend health appointments to ensure that they are achieving outcomes as set out in their plans.	31 December 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislation, such as alarms and food hygiene. This includes ensuring that fire doors are not propped open and that visitors' identification badges are requested before they are invited into 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: SC408369

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Tracey Docksey

Registered manager: Medan Case-Peart

Inspector

Nateisha Cardoza-Evans, Social Care Inspector

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