

SC454838

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A large national provider of children's services operates this home, which is situated in a rural location. It is registered to provide care for up to eight children who may have social and emotional. There is a registered school attached to the home. The inspector only inspected the social care provision on this site.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2020 and holds a relevant level 5 qualification. The provider plans to have two registered managers overseeing the running of this home. The operations manager has applied to Ofsted to become registered. He is currently working towards a level 5 qualification.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 April 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: 7 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/12/2021	Full	Good
15/05/2019	Full	Good
24/04/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, six children were living in the home. One child has experienced a well-planned move from the home in line with his plan. He enjoyed celebrating his time living in the home with staff and the peers he lived with, and he was given gifts, cards and a memory book.

Children benefit from positive relationships with staff. This means that children accept support and encouragement that help them to make progress. The inspectors spoke with the children. The children recognised that it was sometimes hard to live with other children but felt well supported by staff to manage any conflicts.

A range of activities are enjoyed by children. For example, they attend swimming lessons, and this helps children to develop their confidence and improve their swimming ability. Children's individual interests are encouraged by staff, who arrange for children to join clubs in the community that they are interested in. For example, one child has joined a rugby team, and some children enjoy regular visits to a boxing gym. These activities help children's physical health and emotional well-being.

The registered manager and operations manager have regular contact with people who are important to children. One parent said, 'I feel my son has the chance to fulfil his true potential here and can thrive to be whoever he wants to be.' They help parents to understand effective routines that help children to feel safe and secure and contribute to effectively managing challenging behaviours. This helps parents to follow the same structure when children visit them. As a result of the help and support they receive, parents report improvements in the relationships with their children.

Children are in good health; they are registered with local health services and attend routine health appointments. Suitable storage arrangements for medication are in place. However, an audit trail of discussions that staff have held with a health professional about a child's medication is not detailed in their records. This means staff do not always have up-to-date information about routines for administering medication.

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

Target and reward incentive systems are used effectively by staff to help children to understand what is expected of them and support their progress. Staff are proactive in identifying challenging behaviours and developing strategies to support children to develop skills in managing their emotions. When incidents do occur, children are encouraged to reflect with staff and consider alternative responses that would have

a better outcome. As a result, children make good progress from their starting points, and their challenging behaviours and risks are reduced.

Children do not go missing from home. There have been no incidents of bullying, and since the last inspection, there have not been any complaints. Positive feedback from children and professionals has been received that recognises the positive care children receive, the progress children make and how well visitors are welcomed.

Staff retention is good. This means that children receive consistent care from people they know well.

The registered manager and staff learn from incidents that happen. For example, improved arrangements for supervising children are now embedded and help to prevent children from harming each other.

Staff are trained in physical intervention, which is used occasionally to prevent damage to property and harm to the child or others. On most occasions, staff are able to de-escalate challenging behaviours. On one occasion, staff did not return a child's television that had been removed the previous evening to prevent it from being damaged, as they should have done. This resulted in a further incident requiring physical intervention, which could have been avoided.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is inspirational. She is continually developing her knowledge through training and research in order to support staff to provide children with positive experiences that will support them to reach their potential.

The registered manager has recently devised a plan to guide staff on developing children's psychological needs based on the theoretical model 'Maslow's hierarchy of needs'. This helps staff to understand children's individual needs better and plan their support for each child. Despite this good work, the model of care described in the home's statement of purpose is not being delivered. This is because this document sets out a holistic approach to care, education and therapy. However, there is minimal input from a suitable, qualified clinician.

The registered manager understands the strengths and challenges of the home being located in a remote area. To ensure that children remain socially aware and engaged, discussions with children, including children's meetings, are held regularly and explore important topics. For example, staff recently researched Islam and Christian celebrations and used this knowledge to help children to develop their awareness of Eid al-Fitr and Easter. Staff speak to children about things that are being reported in the news so that children have an understanding of current affairs that is relevant to their age and development.

Effective monitoring systems are used by the registered manager and operations manager. This helps them to understand the quality of care children receive and informs development plans for the home.

Managers promote a culture of openness that helps staff to reflect and receive constructive feedback. As a result of good support, staff provide children with care that meets their identified needs and supports them to make progress towards returning to live with their family or with foster carers.

Staff receive regular supervision, and their performance is formally appraised annually. Frequent team meetings help staff to work consistently, and tasks allocated to staff take account of people's strengths and interests. One member of staff spoke with told the inspectors that she plays the role of a grandmother as she is very nurturing in her approach, while other staff take on roles that are more physically challenging, such as supporting outdoor pursuits. This team approach maximises children's experiences.

Staff working in the home hold relevant qualifications and are experienced in caring for children with complex needs. All staff have up-to-date training in mandatory courses. Most staff have completed additional training to support meeting children's individual needs. However, not all staff have completed training in oppositional defiance disorder or sensory processing. This is a missed opportunity to develop the staff's learning.

Records are not always clearly recorded; this means that identified work to be completed with children is not always captured. For example, when children move into the home, staff speak to them about the risks from the electric fences that the farmer uses in the neighbouring field. However, records do not reflect these discussions. When managers complete debriefs with staff, records reflect a brief summary, meaning that records are not always individual.

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
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19 (1)) In particular, items removed from children for safety reasons should be returned as soon as it is safe to do so.	25 May 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that up-to-date records are kept. In particular, records of important discussions with staff, children and professionals should be clearly recorded to help the reader to understand the information discussed. In particular, when there are changes to a child's medication plan, a clear audit trail should be kept. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 62 paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should meet the regulations having regard to the needs of children placed in the home and the role and aims of the home as set out in their statement of purpose. In particular, ensure that the level of therapeutic support set out in the statement of purpose is provided. In addition, ensure that staff receive training to help them to understand children's diagnosed health needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 6 paragraph 1.2)

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: SC454838

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Registered manager: Hannah Stanway

Inspector

Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector

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