

SC467268

Registered provider: The Partnership Of Care Today

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately operated home provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties. There is also a school on site. The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this site.

The home registered with Ofsted in September 2013. The registered manager post is vacant. There is an interim manager in place who has applied to register.

Inspection date: 11 February 2025

Date of last inspection: 15 October 2024

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

One child was living in the home at the time of the inspection, who was present and spoken to. One child moved out of the home as part of a planned move shortly after the last full inspection.

The child living in the home has made sustained progress in the key areas of their life. The child shares positive and trusting relationships with staff. Staff provide clear structure and boundaries. There is a consistent staff team in place that understands the child's needs and preferences.

The home provides a nurturing space and is maintained to a high standard. There is a homely atmosphere that helps the child to feel comfortable and relaxed. Plans are in place to repair the lane that leads to the home to ensure that it remains safe and accessible.

The child has healthy routines in place and attends the on-site school daily. He is making good progress in his education. Staff support the child to develop independence skills, including cooking, cleaning and budgeting.

Recent key work has been completed with the child to prepare him for a planned move back to family. Despite the child having access to a mobile phone when he visits family, the phone is then locked away when he returns to the home. This is a missed opportunity for staff to support the child's knowledge and understanding of how to safely and appropriately manage the use of a mobile phone. The manager has plans in place for further support to be provided to the child in relation to risks they may face when given more responsibility when moving from the home.

The child engages in various local activities, and staff support with transport. There are plans for another child to move into the home shortly. Managers are making arrangements for a second car to be available to ensure that children can access the local community without restrictions due to the rural location of the home.

Safeguarding is a high priority for managers and staff. Staff are clear about their safeguarding responsibilities, and there are detailed written risk assessments in place for children for staff to follow in practice.

The number of significant incidents since the last inspection is low. There have been no incidents of children going missing from the home. The child understands how to make a complaint. There has been one complaint about staff following a physical hold, which was appropriately investigated and managed by staff.

Since the last inspection, there has been one incident requiring the need to hold a child. Records of the incident are completed. The management team has ensured that the child and staff were spoken to about the measure. As a result, staff and the child were able to share their views and reflect on their experiences. The manager's oversight identified some missed opportunities by staff to de-escalate the situation. The manager has addressed this with the staff involved.

Children's behaviour is managed through positive rewards and incentives. There are a low number of consequences. Records detail information about the behaviour and the consequence and include the child's view. Although there is management oversight, it is not individualised to each measure. Therefore, it is not clear that the manager agrees whether each consequence was appropriate, proportionate and effective. The manager has plans in place to change the current recording system and make further improvements.

The appointed manager has applied to Ofsted for registration. He is supported by an experienced operations manager. Both managers know the child well and are committed to improving the quality of care in the home.

Staff are very positive about the support they receive from the management team. Staff receive regular supervision to ensure that they have an opportunity to reflect on their practice. Staff also complete training. This helps to ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities in meeting children's needs. Regular team meetings also support staff's understanding of how to care for children effectively.

Managers have recently recruited additional staff members to complement the existing established team. Safer recruitment practice is robust to ensure that only suitable people work in the home. Staff undertake a robust induction package to develop their knowledge and skills. They are also offered opportunities to shadow more experienced staff and build relationships with children. This is important as some staff have no prior experience of working in residential care. Managers have plans to provide additional training to staff in line with their needs and to further develop staff practice.

Although the statement of purpose has been updated regularly by the manager, the revised copy has not consistently been sent to Ofsted. The manager took action to identify what was causing this delay and is now sending the updated document directly to Ofsted.

Leaders and managers have effective monitoring and review tools in place. They understand the home's strengths and areas for improvement. This helps to progress the quality of care that staff provide for children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/12/2023	Full	Good
12/07/2022	Full	Good
25/01/2022	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, 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose and help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(vi)) In particular, leaders and managers should ensure that staff support children's understanding of key risks they may face in the community and online and provide opportunities for children to develop resilience and skills to keep themselves safe in preparation for moving out of the home.	4 April 2025

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC467268

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership Of Care Today

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Suzanne Birchall, Social Care Inspector

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