

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC005045
<b>Inspector</b>	David Morgan
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Interim
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered person</b>	Care Today (Children's Services) Ltd
<b>Registered person address</b>	Lansdowne House 85 Buxton Road STOCKPORT Cheshire SK2 6LR
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Vivien Anne Snape
<b>Registered manager</b>	POST VACANT / Emma Jane Coen
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	18/09/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	10/03/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

## This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

Since the last inspection the effectiveness of the service has been sustained. A new, qualified and experienced manager has been in post for several months. She brings a consistent and effective style that is appreciated by children and staff. Children and staff express positive views about the service, which are supported by comments from external professionals. One child wrote, 'The staff don't need to get better; they're all brilliant!' The manager is registered for another nearby home and has applied for registration of this home too.

A development plan is in place. Currently, the primary consideration for the manager is the consolidation of care practices under her management. This is progressing well and is taking into account the forthcoming changes in regulations. Consistency of practice is achieved through careful use of both teams. As a result the children are familiar with all the adults who care for them. This is a vital contribution to their successful care. The Statement of Purpose has been improved following the last inspection so it is now clear when and how therapy is provided to children. The second requirement has also been addressed through greater detail being added to written reports about physical interventions. Other improvements are also underway, including the roll-out of a new computer system. New deputising arrangements are in place to support the manager, which helps to ensure that care practices remain consistent.

Senior personnel undertake satisfactory monitoring exercises. The layout usefully shows progress between months. A further improvement has been agreed to the format of the independent monitoring reports so they are separated more from the manager's reports. This is helpful to the reader and also emphasises the independence of the monthly visits. Evidence is not provided in the reports, or elsewhere on site, that the visitors have obtained the necessary consents from

children and their local authorities to read children's files. This is necessary to protect the rights of children in this area. The staff team gather the views of people from outside the service who have an interest in it. This part of quality assurance is an important contribution towards the monitoring of the service and reflects the positive work that has been achieved with most young people. However, in the cases of children who have been discharged recently, the opportunities to obtain such views have not always been taken.

Children experience planned admissions, wherever possible, but the matching process that is undertaken prior to admission is less rigorous than necessary in some cases. The likely compatibility of new and existing residents is not clearly assessed in line with the company procedures. This increases the risk of mismatching new and existing children.

Social workers confirm that the team engage well with children and develop good relationships. Any needs arising from children's culture or religion are addressed as well as possible. As a result, most children settle, develop their independence skills and devise realistic plans for the future. This helps them feel confident and optimistic. Older children undertake relevant training courses to support these targets and younger children attend school regularly.

Sometimes children need additional support from external agencies because of negative behaviours. These episodes are managed well by the team and children feel safe in the home. Good relationships are maintained with external professionals, such as the police and youth offending teams. The majority of children, however, experience few such incidents. Bullying is minimal and children who go missing are monitored closely. The manager has completed an assessment of the locality for use, in particular, when assessing new referrals. This is under review so it more accurately reflects the social pressures that occasionally prevail on the estate. Very few complaints or allegations have been made since the last inspection. Investigations into such issues have not upheld them. However, the members of staff concerned do not always receive a written report. This is necessary in order for them to have verifiable evidence of the outcome.

## Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is one of several homes operated by an independent provider.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/09/2014	Full	good
27/03/2014	Interim	good progress
03/07/2013	Full	good
15/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

## What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

## Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
33 (2001)	inspect such of the children's home's records, as the independent person requires (save for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent to the inspection of those records by the independent person). This is with regard to evidence of consents being placed on site. (Regulation 33(8)b)	27/04/2015

## Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- seek the views of the child, the child's family, social worker and IRO

regularly on the child's care, (unless in individual cases this is not appropriate). This is with regard to obtaining their views about children who have been discharged (NMS 1.4)

- ensure the home implements clear procedures for introducing children to the home, the staff and other children living there. This is with regard to assessing and recording the likely impact of new children on existing ones, and vice versa (NMS 11.1)
- ensure that a clear and comprehensive summary of any allegations made against a particular member of staff, including details of how the allegation was followed up and resolved, a record of any action taken and the decisions reached, is kept on the person's confidential file and a copy is provided to the person as soon as the investigation is concluded. (NMS 20.7)

## **What inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

## **Information about this inspection**

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.