

1240844

Registered provider: Care 4 Children

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is one of a number of homes operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people make good progress living here.
- Young people have positive and respectful relationships with staff.
- Young people feel happy and safe at the home. They feel that their voices are listened to and any complaints that they have are dealt with swiftly.
- Young people enjoy education and have aspirations. They are making good progress in their learning.
- Staff know the young people well. Staff support and encourage them to develop individual interests and hobbies.
- A consistent, nurturing and motivated staff team supports young people to learn to manage their own risk-taking behaviours and make safer choices.
- Young people receive support to access specialist services that meet their assessed needs.
- Young people are encouraged and supported to meet with their family and friends
- Staff communicate well with the young people's families and friends.
- Staff work well with other agencies and communication is very good. Other agencies are positive about the home.
- The manager has robust quality assurance systems in place, which ensure that practice is consistent, of good quality and outcome focused.

The children's home's areas for development

- Recording is not always accurate and clear. Key information is sometimes missing.
- Health assessments do not always take into account environmental hazards and risks.
- Sanctions do not always have the desired outcome, yet the same sanctions are repeatedly used.
- Transition to independence arrangements does not always support young people to manage risk effectively.

Recent inspection history

N/A first inspection following registration

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
<p>36: Children’s case records</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that case records are kept securely in the children’s home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there. (Regulation 36 (2)(c))</p>	15/05/2017

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4.) Specifically, key-working records are completed for all areas of concern and clearly recorded.
- Ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home’s support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 17, paragraph 3.27.) Specifically, ensure that young people are supported in managing their own risk-taking behaviour in preparation for living independently.
- Ensure that any sanction used to address poor behaviour is restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. (‘Guide to the children’s home regulations including the quality standards’, page 46. para 9.38)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is the first full inspection since the home was re-registered in February 2017.

Young people make good progress in this home. Young people are positive about living here and can identify with the positive progress they have made. For example, one young person said that he 'was not in a good place when he arrived, but things are much better now'. Furthermore, agencies report that they are very happy with the care and support offered to young people. One social worker explained that the approach the home takes is wonderful and that they could not have asked for a better placement. Another social worker said that, '[name of home] have done wonders for [name of young person] and have really turned him around. Staff have given [name of young person] structure, routines, boundaries and discipline that have worked really well.' Furthermore, they said that they are 'more than happy with the placement and are grateful'.

The home is welcoming. The atmosphere is calm and homely. It is reflective of the young people living there and they are encouraged to personalise their home. There are pictures on the walls that show young people undertaking activities with staff and pictures of young people's families.

Young people are involved in the running of the home. There are regular and meaningful young people's meetings. Young people are actively involved in developing the weekly menus and their weekly activity schedules. Culturally, young people have the opportunity to explore cultures and beliefs that are not familiar to them. Furthermore, they receive support to explore their own culture and identity.

Young people have positive and trusting relationships with staff, and each other. They interact well. They feel safe and cared for. They understand what is expected of them and respond well to clear routines and boundaries. Young people feel listened to. They are able to share their hopes and fears. When issues do arise, they are dealt with in a timely way and young people are satisfied with the outcome.

Young people receive individual care that reflects their continuously reviewed needs. This supports young people to recognise the achievements that they have made and identify future goals. Young people receive the support they need to understand and manage their own risk-taking behaviour, which enables them to make safer decisions. Staff work proactively with young people, their families and the relevant agencies to reduce risk. For example, missing from home was a key risk indicator for young people when they arrived. This risk has reduced considerably. Through a nurturing and consistent approach, young people are taking responsibility for their behaviour and making choices that are more positive. When young people continue to engage in risk-taking behaviour, staff try new strategies and work with other agencies to improve outcomes for young people.

Young people receive support to access specialist services that meet their identified needs. Staff are proactive in this and follow the guidance provided by specialist services.

A professional from a specialist service commented that, '[home] communication with agencies and young people is excellent. Not only in their communication, but listening to what we feel the young person needs and acting on it.' This partnership working offers young people consistency in the support they receive. It also allows strong professional relationships to develop between agencies. Young people respond to this well and risk-taking behaviour reduces. Staff liaise with other agencies well and feedback from them is positive.

When young people first arrive at the home, they are not engaged in education. Young people are now accessing full-time education and they are all engaging well. Attendance at school is good. Educational provision is good and offers a range of subjects and vocational activities. Young people speak positively about their education and their achievements. They are exceeding in some elements of their education. Young people are motivated by this and they are committed to doing well. They can see the short and long-term benefits of education.

Young people are encouraged and supported to develop independence skills. When appropriate, specific plans are in place to support young people gain the knowledge and skills needed for a successful transition to independence. However, young people do not always receive the freedoms and flexibility that they need in managing their own risk-taking behaviours and, thus, progression and readiness for living independently is not always clear.

Young people are encouraged to take part in a range of activities. When it is difficult to engage young people in activities, staff will explore young people's interests and continue to encourage young people to try new things.

Young people have regular contact with their family and friends. Staff support and encourage the relationships between young people and their families; as a result, the amount and, indeed, the flexibility of contact increases over time. Young people speak extremely positively about this. They say that staff support them in this and that they enjoy spending time with their families and friends.

Staff promote the achievements that young people make and these are routinely captured in weekly and monthly feedback, monitoring and recording. Social workers find this very helpful, as it enables them to see progression and the achievements that young people are making.

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

Young people who live at the home are safe and they know that staff care about them. Staff are nurturing in their approach. Young people are responding positively to this and enjoy spending time with staff. Young people benefit from regular and highly effective key working sessions. The sessions explore issues well and encourage young people to reflect. They learn about their risk-taking behaviour and the influences associated with them on both a short and long-term basis. Research and theory is used to inform the work undertaken. This work receives support and guidance from a specialist advisor. Young people have the time and space to explore their wishes and feelings. Direct work is evidence based and outcome focused. It is clear that young people are benefiting from

this approach and this is evident in the reduction of risk-taking behaviour. On occasion, the recording of key issues is missed and, thus, information is not always clear. Furthermore, the case record database has a technical fault and does not always adequately store young people's confidential details.

Young people's placement plans are of a good standard and are easy to follow. Risk assessments and plans are also good. Information is clear and the documents are easy to navigate. The monitoring of need, risk and the progress young people make is good, and the presentation of this information is clear and easily accessible to young people. Key environmental hazards and risk factors are not always identified. Therefore, some aspects of the health and well-being of young people are not fully considered.

Staff and young people are clear about the standards of behaviour that are acceptable. Young people respect this. They benefit from effective and preventative behaviour management practices that are based on good relationships. Staff are able to identify and respond quickly to issues that arise. They de-escalate incidents effectively without physical intervention. Incidents are followed up by key work sessions or individual discussions. There is a clear record of the issues, the actions, and any follow-up work that may be required. This is a key strength of the home.

Young people receive support and incentives to take responsibility for their own behaviour and make good choices. Sanctions are not often used. However, when they are used, they are not proving to be effective, as young people repeat the same behaviour. Young people would benefit from sanctions that are restorative in nature and have the desired outcome.

The recruitment and selection of staff is sufficiently robust. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate steps to verify visitors' identities to protect young people. Health and safety checks are completed and this ensures a safe living environment.

Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities to keep young people safe. Staffing levels are very good. This allows young people to have access to one-to-one support. In addition to this, it ensures that young people have the required safeguards in place and that the management of risk is effective.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leadership and management is good. Management oversight is effective. Expectations of staff and the standard of practice required is clear. The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is new in post and, thus, new to the home and the team. She has managed the transition very effectively. Young people and staff say that she has made many improvements to the home since she came into post. They speak very highly of her. Senior members of staff support the manager to effectively run the home. This is in line with the aims and ethos of the statement of purpose. Staff are suitably qualified or working towards relevant qualifications. The staff team is recently formed; however, staff work well together and already provide a consistent approach to young people.

The ethos of the home is based on good relationships and mutual respect. Staff say they feel supported and that they are encouraged to enhance their knowledge and skills. Staff training is available and the training matrix is clear. The training provided meets the needs of the young people. Staff say that this helps them to understand their role in supporting young people to achieve good outcomes. The manager is proactive and ensures that staff are able to access the required training and are given the time to study.

Staff have a clear understanding of the needs of young people. Staff work effectively together to ensure that young people receive consistent positive messages. Young people are evidently responding to these reinforced positive messages. This is helping young people progress well and achieve their individual goals. It also helps young people to gain confidence and try new things. Young people receive continuous praise for their achievements, which provides further motivation for them.

The external monitoring of the home is completed to a good standard. The manager uses this information to support the continuous development of the home. The manager has robust quality assurance practices in place, which are effective. She has a full understanding of the strengths of the home and areas that need further improvement. She is passionate and committed to secure positive change and this is evident in the improvements she has made to the home.

Liaison with other agencies is effective. Professionals speak very positively about staff communication and partnership working. They are regularly kept up to date with the progress of young people and any incidents are reported in a timely way. Agencies value the home and the positive changes that young people have made since living here.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1240844

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Care 4 Children

Registered provider address: Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual: Ali-Raza Sarwar

Registered manager: Shelly Daly

Inspector

Lisa Gregoire-Parker, social care regulatory inspector

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