

SC021679

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of a number of children's homes owned by a private organisation. The home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties (EBD) and/or learning disabilities (LD).

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 June 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 7 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people with a history of non-engagement make and sustain valuable relationships within this home.
- Where young people have previously been involved in risk-taking behaviour, this is greatly reduced.
- Young people with a history of non-attendance within educational services now access full-time education and external college settings. Young people make excellent progress.
- Consultation with young people is very well planned. Young people are eager to engage and voice valuable views and opinions.
- Healthcare planning is excellent. Collaborative working between the service, young people and health professionals means that all health concerns are exceptionally well addressed.
- Young people make excellent progress. Incidents of unacceptable behaviour are considerably reduced.
- Young people rarely absent themselves from the home. On the occasions that this has happened, staff take effective action to return the young person and work through the reasons for the episode.
- Internal monitoring of the home is highly consistent and provides a detailed analysis of the service provision in the home. Any areas for further development are responded to quickly.
- Staff benefit from excellent training opportunities. This range of targeted training provides staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to understand young people's needs and complexities.
- Supervision is consistent and effective. Staff feel exceptionally well supported and are happy and motivated within their work with young people.
- This children's home has a small and consistent staff team. Strong relationships are formed between young people and staff.
- The registered manager is consistent in developing the service. Plans are unique and encompass individual strategies to help young people achieve.
- Each bedroom is decorated in a style requested by the young person. A great deal of effort is taken to get each bedroom just right and just how the young person wants it.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Promote access to health advice lines where required.

- Provide a clear analysis of the care provision within the regulation 44 report.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/11/2016	Full	Good
04/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/06/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Ensure all staff have the relevant knowledge to respond to young people's presenting health needs. This specifically refers to updating the home's protocol to ensure that staff contact NHS Choices for professional advice if a young person is deemed to be under the influence of substances or alcohol. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.12)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for the care and protection of young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65 paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Since the last inspection, one young person has left the service. The registered manager and staff felt that they were unable to meet the young person's needs. They worked tremendously hard with external agencies to highlight concerns of risk-taking behaviours to the local authority. This resulted in a supported transition to a more suitable placement. At the time of this inspection, three young people are accommodated.

Young people's educational needs are very well met within this home. Each young person has a full-time educational placement. Attendance and achievement are consistently good. A teacher said, 'This home really goes the extra mile and provides excellent support for the young people. We have very good relationships with the home and communication is always consistent.' One young person said, 'Before I came to this home, I had been kicked out of loads of schools. Staff really support you. I've just taken nine GCSEs and I am looking forward to going to college after the summer. I received the "pupil of the year" award and attended a really posh ceremony.' The staff enable young people to understand that education is important to achieve good future life chances. Consequently, young people develop personal goals and aspirations for their futures.

Healthcare planning is excellent. Young people attend routine appointments and check-ups with support from the staff team. Where additional support is required, staff link into a range of external agencies in order that young people receive the specialist advice they need. Likewise, regular visits from the looked-after children's nurse enable young people and staff to discuss any health concerns or queries. For example, issues including legal highs, cannabis and relationships are addressed using learning tools, such as documentaries, key-work sessions, and sessions provided by the community nurse. Staff

say, 'We also provide certificated training courses for young people to learn about the things that can affect their emotional health, such as bullying and social media. We try and keep information real.' Where health concerns arise, staff take prompt action to address these. However, records of contact numbers for health advice require some updating.

The foundation for all work undertaken in the home is based on the trusting relationships that young people form with staff. A young person said, 'The staff are great here. I get on really well with them and can talk to them about anything. They are funny and spend time with you. It's just nice.' Observations of young people and staff sharing banter, discussions and making plans provide good evidence of the mutual respect developed between them.

Young people's goals and targets are recorded and regularly reviewed with them. Regular key-work sessions ensure that young people receive the right help and support to make excellent progress and remain on target. Young people are consistently involved in the development and review of their individual plans, including their views on the progress they make. Consequently, young people are clear on their current targets and goals and how they are to be achieved.

Young people benefit from consistent contact with family and friends. A young person said, 'I get to see my family often and I like that.' Likewise, where relationships have broken down, staff provide a detailed risk assessment and high level of support in order to rebuild these relationships. This has proved successful, with some young people establishing regular contact with the right level of support and guidance.

Planned and unplanned activities take place on a regular basis. Individual interests are well supported and include fencing, fishing, cinema, trampolining, go-karting, football and day trips with staff. Young people say, 'We do lots of stuff; sometimes we do games in the house or we will go out.' Furthermore, young people have developed friendships within the local area. Where appropriate, friends are allowed to visit the home and stay for tea or watch a movie. The registered manager says, 'We want the young people to have as many normal experiences as possible. We want them to feel like this is home.'

Regular young people's meetings take place and this ensures that young people can have a voice in the day-to-day planning for their care, for example, menus, activities, decor and trips. Young people engage well within these meetings and are active in reviewing their previous requests. Consequently, young people learn to understand that their views and opinions are valued by staff, and are appropriately responded to.

Young people's journeys within the home are exceptionally well documented. Photographs, memory books and awards are displayed around the home. Young people are happy and settled. They present as relaxed and cared for and are committed to achieving their goals for the future.

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

Young people's safety is suitably protected in the home. Where child protection concerns arise, staff respond immediately and take every opportunity to ensure the young person's safety. This is evidenced in the excellent work undertaken with an ex-resident. Staff worked in close partnership with a range of external agencies in order to minimise

risk. This proved to be successful. A range of risk-taking behaviours significantly reduced. The community police officer said, 'I have been invited to the home and have met the young people and staff. The young people now know who I am and what my role is. We have built up a really good rapport and I enjoy my visits to the home. I have confidence in the staff team; they really go the extra mile. They do a great job.'

Young people are supported to live together and respect each other as individuals with different life experiences, needs and opinions. Likewise, young people are enabled to learn about behaviours such as bullying, both from a victim and perpetrator perspective. Certificated training courses, key-work sessions and young people's meetings regularly take place and this empowers young people to recognise the impact of bullying and take the appropriate action to make it stop.

Detailed and effective risk assessments are developed in partnership with placing social workers. They detail the action to be taken to reduce and minimise risk and the response to identified risk. A member of staff said, 'We review risk assessments all the time in team meetings and look at different ways of working with young people. I think it is good because we are working in the same way and this has helped to reduce risks.' A young person said, 'Staff want to protect us. We understand they want to make sure we are OK. They always check things out and it's cool, really.'

Physical intervention is rarely used in the home. Staff focus on de-escalation and redirection techniques in order to defuse situations. On the whole, this has proven successful. Where physical intervention has been applied, care is taken to ensure the safety of the young people at all times. Records of physical intervention are extremely transparent and reflective of the home's policy and individual care plan. A member of staff said, 'We only use physical intervention where absolutely necessary; we try everything before considering an intervention. We always contact the on-call manager, who will come to the home to offer additional support if necessary'. As a result, only minimal interventions have been used since the last full inspection.

Young people live in a home where their safety and well-being are extremely well supported. Detailed individual missing from home plans are in place and this ensures that the correct procedures and strategies are implemented without delay. Likewise, external agencies work with staff and young people to ensure that a consistent approach is maintained should a young person go missing from home. Therefore, risk-management processes enable young people to begin to understand issues regarding personal safety and make informed decisions about their actions and behaviours. A community police officer said, 'This is a brilliant home. They do everything to keep young people safe and work very well with the police. Young people rarely go missing.'

Young people know how to complain. Information is provided in the young people's guide and organisational complaints documents. Procedures for managing complaints are in place and clear evidence demonstrates that they are handled fairly and investigated thoroughly by the manager or external nominated person. A young person said, 'The staff are fair and they do listen to us. I really like it here.'

Individual behaviour management plans identify triggers for negative behaviour and

provide direction on the management of unacceptable behaviours. Records for behaviour management strategies are clear. A young person said, 'We talk to staff about what is the best way to sort things out and they are really fair. Sometimes, we miss out on something, have to go to bed early or lose our incentive. We know what the rules are and they are fair.' Young people trust staff and there is a clear mutual respect and regard. The relationships formed between young people and staff are clearly fundamental to all of the work undertaken in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is well managed by a registered manager who has been in post since 2010. He has a wealth of experience within adolescent residential care and is qualified with an NVQ level 5 diploma in leadership for health and social care. He is supported by a deputy manager and senior residential worker who are also both qualified at NVQ level 5.

Young people live in a home that is managed in their best interests. The home meets the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose, and young people, social workers and families are clear about the service and support that the home provides.

Internal monitoring systems provide the home with an exceptional approach to the overall monitoring of care. Detailed information highlights areas for development and the registered manager's action plan details the methods used to enhance the service. Staff receive a high level of support from the registered manager and deputy manager.

Supervision takes place regularly and serves to identify training needs and personal development targets. A staff member said, 'I have worked in other homes but we do things differently here. We all want what is best for the young people and every day we push to make sure we are all going in the right direction.'

External monitoring takes place on a monthly basis and provides a good overview of the care provided in the home and the progress that young people make. However, reports would benefit from a clearer analysis of the overall performance of the home.

Staff are provided with an annual training package. Mandatory training is regularly refreshed while additional training based around the theoretical framework for attachment is the basis for all planned work with young people. Likewise, staff undertake regular training via the Social Care Training Hub and also deliver monthly presentations to colleagues and young people within the team meeting. This ensures that staff receive up-to-date quality training essential to maintaining the excellent childcare practice evident in the home.

The registered manager makes good use of reflective practice, the views of external services and families are taken into account to ensure that young people's needs are appropriately met. Likewise, patterns and trends are routinely reviewed. Data provides an excellent tool for both staff and young people when reviewing progress and planning for the future.

The registered manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering excellent child-centred practice tailored to the individual and personal needs of young

people. The effectiveness of this approach is measurable in the progress that young people make, particularly in education, self-esteem and positive social integration.

The home employs a strong and committed staff team. Senior residential staff are qualified at NVQ level 5 and residential staff are all qualified at NVQ level 3. The training of staff at this level ensures that they are suitably qualified in the care and management of young people. Young people's records are securely stored and regularly updated which means they accurately reflect the young people's progress at any given time.

Leaders and managers ensure that all referrals to the home are suitably assessed for compatibility. Evidence of impact assessment leading to decisions not to place demonstrates a clear commitment to the young people already placed.

Managers and staff routinely notify Ofsted, placing authorities, parents and community police of any concern or event involving a child in accordance with Regulation 40. Immediate action is taken to reduce risks including, where necessary, additional staffing. The home places the needs of the young people at the forefront of their practice and this is evidenced in the excellent progress they make.

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 whom 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: SC021679

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today Children's Services

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

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Nigel Evans

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, social care regulatory inspector

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