

SC458021

Registered provider: Stoke-on-Trent City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A local authority operates the home, and they support young people from that area.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 September 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: 2 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive personalised care and support from staff, and they benefit from having individual care plans and risk assessments.

- Staff work closely with education professionals to support attendance and participation.
- Staff promote contact for young people so that they sustain their close relationships with the people who are important to them.
- The manager makes sure that there are good working relationships with partner agencies, which promotes collaborative working.
- The manager makes sure that staff receive regular supervision and training to ensure that they are skilled and competent to meet the needs of the young people who they care for.
- Young people are consistently encouraged and supported to increase their semi-independence skills in line with their age, ability and level of understanding.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager has not made sure that the home's statement of purpose contains all relevant information.
- The manager needs to make sure that she keeps a copy of her own supervision records.
- The manager has not reviewed the home's development plan to make sure that it is current and up to date.
- The manager needs to make sure that young people's meetings are re-established so that young people have different opportunities to give their views on their care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
26/10/2016	Full	Good
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/01/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (3)(a))	20/09/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with Regulation 33 (4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- Ensure that the workforce plan can fulfil the workforce related requirements of Regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Ensure that young people are consulted regularly on their views about their experiences, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the young person's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Young people should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a safe, caring and supportive environment that enables them to make good progress in many aspects of their lives. Young people have had notable improvements in relation to their health and contact with family members. This is a result of a dedicated, experienced and focused staff team. A social worker said, 'It is an excellent home that provides a good standard of care. The staff care about the young people and always do their best for them.'

The manager ensures that all young people have individualised, detailed care plans that clearly outline how their needs will be supported. Staff implement these plans effectively, with regular updates and reviews to reflect young people's changing needs and progress. This means that staff are consistent in their care and young people receive the appropriate support.

The healthcare needs of young people are met. Young people are registered with primary healthcare services, and they are supported to attend all necessary appointments. Appropriate arrangements are in place for the safe administration and management of medicines to promote the safety and well-being of young people.

All young people at the home have made good progress in engaging in their education and training. Staff use every opportunity to help young people to engage in education successfully. This supportive approach enables young people to reach their full potential.

Young people are involved in day-to-day decisions in the home. Though young people's meetings are due to be re-established, there are regular one-to-ones and daily communication with staff. This helps to ensure that children and young people have ownership of decisions made in the home, helping them to take personal responsibility.

Young people are supported to develop independence and life skills that are relevant to their age, level of understanding and ability. Those who are eligible have pathway plans in place setting out how they will progress into independence. This means that young people are better equipped for their transition to adulthood. A social worker said, 'The staff are doing some good work with promoting her independence, which is really something that is important to [name].'

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

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices. They have a positive understanding of young people's needs and particular vulnerabilities. Appropriate action is taken to address them. The use of clear risk assessments and safe working practices makes sure that young people are safe and well protected while living at the home.

Good relationships exist between staff and young people, and because of this there have been no restraints since the previous inspection. Young people are supported to take responsibility for their actions and restorative techniques are promoted in favour of punitive measures such as sanctions. This gives young people the opportunity to repair damaged relationships, and has avoided the need for criminalising young people.

Because of good supervision by staff, incidents of young people going missing from the home are infrequent. This has had a positive impact on young people's safety and well-being. When young people do go missing, staff follow the locally agreed protocol and work closely with police to secure their safe return to the home.

Staff help young people to maintain contact with their family and friends. Staff will

facilitate contact, for example, by providing transport so that these important connections are maintained. These measures mean that young people receive every encouragement to keep in contact with their families.

Young people live in a home that is physically safe and secure. Regular environmental safety checks are undertaken and staff and young people regularly practise evacuating the home in an emergency. When appointing staff, the organisation follows safer recruitment practice guidelines. This means that only those deemed suitable to work with vulnerable individuals look after young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a new manager in post in the home, who took up the position in July 2017. Ofsted is currently processing her application for registration. The manager is currently due to undertake her level 5 national vocational qualification in leadership for health and social care.

The manager has made sure that staff are equipped with the knowledge and skills to meet the needs of those young people currently living in the home. Relevant training, such as child protection, self-harm and e-safety, is provided to all staff. New staff undergo an induction programme and all staff are qualified in their roles or are within regulatory timescales to complete their qualification.

Staff receive regular supervision, which enables them to reflect upon their practice and recognise their own strengths and weaknesses. However, the manager does not receive a copy of her own supervision records. This does not support the manager to reflect on her performance between meetings.

The manager has not made sure that the statement of purpose is an accurate record of the service. For example, the document does not highlight that the home does not have internet access for young people. This means that parents and placing authorities are not being provided with an accurate overview of the home.

The independent visitor provides an oversight of the running of the home, making clear reference to areas of practice that need to improve for the benefit and safety of young people. The independent visitor consults with young people and social workers, to ensure that their views are considered in service development.

There are effective and meaningful partnerships between the home, police and other safeguarding professionals to promote young people's safety and welfare. The manager has a workforce plan for the home. The plan requires reviewing to update staffing and the targets within it.

In response to the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection, the manager has taken action to make sure that medication procedures have been improved, the home's health and safety has been addressed, a review of care is now being undertaken and staff recording is more detailed.

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 differences 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: SC458021

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre, Glebe Street,
Stoke-on-Trent ST4 1HH

Responsible individual: Susan Hammersley

Registered manager: Kirstianne Pierce

Inspector

Dave Carrigan: social care inspector

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