

# 1254843

Registered provider: Together For Children Sunderland Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

The home is operated under trust arrangements to accommodate up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection date:** 24 January 2018

**Judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Date of last inspection:** 12 September 2017

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **This inspection**

### **The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection**

This home was judged outstanding at the last full inspection.  
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The home's manager and staff team continue to provide outstanding care to the young people. The young people continue to make excellent progress in their health, education and development. Where young people are not making progress, the home's manager takes decisive action. The young people have enjoyed a range of experiences, including outdoor activities and an overseas trip to France.

There are structural and cosmetic changes to be made to the home and plans are in place to progress the developments over the coming months. The young people are being consulted about some of the developments. The changes include a sensory room

and all bedrooms are to have an en suite bathroom. This will provide the young people with a sense of ownership and pride, minimising potential damage to the home.

The home has had several new admissions since the last full inspection. Despite this, the staff team has worked hard to settle the young people. Missing from home episodes occur rarely. The last reported incident was in August 2017.

Recordings and care plans remain robust; however, not all serious incidents have been notified to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector (HMCI). Despite this, there are no serious widespread failings in relation to safeguarding procedures. The home has followed safeguarding protocols and young people continue to be kept safe.

Permanent members of staff receive regular supervision, where they are able to have reflective discussions of practice. To further strengthen the home's safeguarding culture, all staff members, including sessional workers, should receive regular supervision, with safeguarding to be added as a stand-alone agenda item. This could be extended to staff team meetings to embed the safeguarding culture further.

Key-worker sessions follow what has been identified within individualised care plans and risk assessments. The young people's views are recorded; however, this is not always consistently carried out. To strengthen the home's practice, the views, wishes and feelings of the young people should be included within all key-worker sessions. This would provide young people with an opportunity to reflect. This would establish the young person's level of understanding and, where necessary, further work to be explored.

The staff team comprises a dedicated and skilled workforce. The managers are good at utilising the strengths of each member of staff to achieve good outcomes for the young people. To develop the staff team and its practice, the home's manager must ensure that appraisals happen yearly. This will provide opportunities for management and self-evaluation of performance to ensure that each member of staff is able to fulfil the aims and objectives set out in the home's statement of purpose.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2017	Full	Outstanding

## 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 ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	01/04/2018
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	13/02/2018

### Recommendations

- In some instances, a child may express wishes that are not always in their best interests or which may conflict with the views of other children in the home. In such circumstances, the responsible adults will have to balance the wishes of the child against what they judge to be in the best interests of the child and reach a reasonable view about the best way forward in the interests of all. The reasons for reaching any decision will need to be carefully explained to and understood by the child or children concerned. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 21, paragraph 4.9)  
In particular, that young people's views and comments are recorded within key-worker sessions.
- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk, and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the home. Staff should support children to understand how to ask for help to stay safe and that the home is an environment which supports this. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.10)  
In particular, safeguarding should be a stand-alone agenda item within team meetings.
- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to

the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.14)

In particular, safeguarding should be a stand-alone agenda item in supervisions.

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 60, paragraph 13.2)  
In particular, sessional staff should receive regular supervisions.

## **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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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:** 1254843

**Provision sub-type:** children's home

**Registered provider:** Together For Children Sunderland Limited

**Registered provider address:** City of Sunderland, P O Box 102, Sunderland SR2 7DN

**Responsible individual:** Debra Patterson

**Registered manager:** Graeme Conley

### Inspector:

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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