

# 1254835

Registered provider: Together for Children Sunderland Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is provided by a limited company.

**Inspection dates:** 26 to 27 June 2018

**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:** 12 March 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/11/2017	Full	Good

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

### **Recommendations**

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children 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)

In particular, regular meetings should take place to consider the views, wishes and feelings of each young person. The registered manager should consider creative ways that enable young people to participate and be consulted.

### **Inspection judgements**

#### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The home is well decorated and maintained. There are photographs of the young people around the home. The computer room is very focused on the young people in terms of its décor. It is used for fun activities as well as educational events.

Since the last inspection, one young person has moved on in a planned way. There has been one new admission in April 2018. Ahead of the recent admission, the manager completed an impact risk assessment to assess the appropriateness of the placement. For that young person, his admission to the home was sensitively planned. Subsequently, he has settled very well.

Significant improvements have been made to young people's care plans and risk assessments. Care plans reflect the individual needs of each young person. They identify clear strategies to support young people to help them make progress.

The home acknowledges the importance of young people accessing training and educational placements. Some young people are making good progress in education. For those young people who refuse school attendance, there are alternative educational arrangements made. This supports young people with the transition back into their identified educational placement.

The young people benefit from having positive relationships with the adults who care for them. Planned activities and holidays have been arranged. This has helped disrupt some risk-taking behaviours and has also provided positive experiences for the young people.

Each young person has a dedicated key worker to help them to reflect on their past experiences and future planning. Care plans inform the direct work undertaken with

young people and their views are recorded.

To further strengthen practice in the home, the young people's wishes and feelings should be regularly considered. Consulting young people on their views would inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided.

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

Comprehensive risk assessments identify young people's individual vulnerabilities from the point of admission. They clearly link to care plans that identify direct work to be undertaken in key worker sessions. Care planning is considered in a multi-agency forum. This demonstrates the home's ability to follow 'Working Together' protocols.

Risk assessments are quickly updated following significant events or when new risks are identified. This enables the staff team to review the effectiveness of strategies used to mitigate risk of harm.

The home has benefited from training, advice and guidance from a clinical psychologist. This has helped strengthen the strategies identified within risk assessments. Strategies now consider effective ways to proactively mitigate risk of harm. Observations made during this inspection are that the staff team can apply effectively the strategies within their daily practice.

Issues around self-harming behaviours are considered on an individual basis and reflected in risk assessments and crisis management plans. Staff have received training around self-harming behaviours. The manager has sourced additional training and materials to further strengthen the staff team's skills and knowledge in this area.

The number of episodes of going missing from the home are high overall but have fluctuated over recent months. For some young people, the number of these episodes has reduced. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow. Active steps are taken to locate and return young people to the home safely. Return home interviews take place to identify strategies to help minimise future episodes.

The manager is working towards embedding an attachment-style model to the home's practice. Individual behavioural management plans are in place and are effective. Sanctions and physical interventions are rarely used.

There is a good safeguarding culture in the home with safeguarding being added as a stand-alone agenda item in team meetings and supervisions.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager is appropriately qualified and experienced. He is supported in his role by a highly effective senior team. Additionally, the staff team is dedicated and hard working. Collectively, the staff team works well to provide consistent care to the young people.

The staff team feels supported in their individual roles. They receive regular supervisions. Recordings of supervisions are comprehensive and set out clear targets. Quality assurance processes allow the manager and senior staff team to monitor and review risk assessments and care plans. Areas of development feature in supervision discussions to help improve practice.

The manager supports learning and development within the team. To help the staff to keep updated on policies, procedures and legislation, these are discussed in a range of forums, for example team meetings and supervisions. Training programmes attended support learning and reflective practice.

The manager has a clear sense of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has plans to take improvements forward. This includes ongoing consultations with a consultant psychologist.

A new staff member has joined the team. She is highly experienced and has previously worked with young people in a range of settings. The manager has been astute during the recruitment process. He has carefully selected staff members who will contribute to the existing skills within the team.

## **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:** 1254835

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

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

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

**Responsible individual:** Debra Patterson

**Registered manager:** Mark Christie

## Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

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