

# SC057718

Registered provider: The Together Trust

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

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

The home is led by an experienced registered manager who been in post for a number of years.

**Inspection dates:** 14 to 15 May 2019

**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:** 26 November 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
26/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
20/04/2017	Full	Outstanding
05/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/08/2016	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
<p>The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1))</p> <p>In particular, this refers to plans or reports relating to the child, such as local authority care plans.</p>	15/06/2019
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(a) understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>(b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(vii) provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably.</p> <p>(Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(vii))</p> <p>With particular reference to the replacement of some young people’s bedroom blinds and furniture.</p>	15/06/2019

### Recommendations

- Under Regulation 46, the registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and the premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home’s location and strategies for managing these. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 64, paragraph 15.1) In particular, this relates to the risk assessment of temporary parameter fencing.
- Short breaks settings should seek to build relationships with others involved in the child’s care in so far as this is appropriate in relation to their role within the

wider system of the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.11) Specifically, ensure that there is an agreed consistent care plan between the home and family.

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The design of the home should, where appropriate, enable children to develop independence skills within the supportive environment of the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.25) In particular, ensure that visual methods of communication are used consistently throughout the home

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people living at the home receive a good quality of care which is specific to their individual needs. Young people with complex needs are looked after by staff who are clearly committed to caring for them. The home provides a nurturing and safe environment where they can flourish.

From the point of admission to the home, young people make good progress. One young person came into the home needing five staff to support them. This has now reduced to two. This is a testament to the skills of the staff. They are able to build trusting relationships with young people. A parent said, 'I feel blessed my daughter is at the home. They have healed a broken mother.'

Staff know young people well. Non-verbal young people are encouraged to participate in decision-making using pictures and symbols. However, visual prompts for one young person to choose their clothing for the day are not in use, which inhibits their progress.

Young people, with the support from staff, make valuable contributions to life in the home, including the decor, and activity and furniture choice. Young people with barriers to communication are valued and their views respected.

Young people who are making the transition to adult services are well supported. The home remains focused on the individual needs of each young person. Staff ensure that the right care is in place before young people move on. This means that young people are well placed within new settings and can continue to build on the progress made. They gain levels of independence appropriate to their abilities.

One young person has moved from short breaks at the home to a shared care arrangement. Currently, there are inconsistencies between the care provided in the

home and that provided by family. Consequently, the young person may not progress as well, due to different expectations.

A strength of the home is the relationship with parents. There is regular, sometimes daily, communication between staff and parents. Families are welcomed into the home to spend time with their children. A parent said, 'It is like a family home, not a children's home. They don't judge me.' This welcoming and open approach to families means that young people are able to grow up experiencing loving family relationships when being cared for away from home.

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

The home has good safeguarding measures in place. Staff know how to keep young people safe. New staff have initial training about the home's model of practice. They can explain how they use this model when caring for young people.

While safer recruitment policies are in place to make sure staff recruited have the skills and knowledge to undertake their role, one staff file seen by inspectors did not show full references. This could mean that young people are being cared for by staff who do not meet the necessary requirements to undertake their role safely.

Sanctions and restraint are not used within the home. The focus is on promoting and celebrating positive behaviours, which means that young people do not experience negative consequences for their behaviour. Staff know that young people would struggle to make sense of consequences.

There are opportunities for young people to spend time on their own in the home in a safe environment. Giving young people this space often results in them being able to manage their emotions without involvement from staff. This helps young people to develop their own ways of dealing with upset or anxiety which meet their individual needs.

Staff have a good understanding of young people's behaviours. They make good use of written assessments and plans to support young people. When incidents do occur, there are clear strategies in place to keep young people safe.

The garden of the home has some play equipment for young people, including a large trampoline which young people enjoy using. A small area of the garden has temporary fencing which is of poor quality and does not ensure the safety of young people.

Young people are encouraged to take age- and ability-appropriate risks. They can take part in activities going on within the local community and further afield. This also contributes to the development of their independence skills.

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

The home is led by an experienced and skilled manager who has been in post for several years. Staff value the experience of the manager and her commitment and passion to achieving the best outcomes for young people. The manager is retiring in July 2019 and the process of recruiting to the post is underway.

The home employs staff with a range of skills and experience. Four new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. All new staff undertake induction training before starting at the home. Staff are then expected to shadow experienced colleagues. This means that new staff are given time to understand the needs of each young person and become familiar with the way the home is run. One member of staff said, 'Every day we experience different things together. We are a family.'

Staff receive regular planned supervision. They are also able to have additional time with their line manager if they need this. Managers use this supervision effectively to review performance and support staff development. Staff have the opportunity to lead on areas of practice. For example, overseeing the training and development programme. This promotes a shared responsibility across the staff team for all aspects of the home. This also contributes to staff development.

Most case records are comprehensive and provide staff with the information they need to care for each young person and contribute to the plans for their future. For one young person, current care plans are not on case records. This was also a finding at the last inspection. This means that staff do not always have current information to plan care effectively.

Most areas of the home provide a warm and welcoming environment for young people. At the time of inspection, a refurbishment of the home was in progress. These plans include a new sensory room for young people. Some young people do not have any blinds or curtains in their bedroom and one person has a broken wardrobe. The manager did begin to address this during the inspection. Young people not having blinds at their windows was noted at the last inspection.

New admissions to the home are well planned. The needs of the current young people are prioritised. One young person is in the process of a planned move to the home.

Staff understand the feelings of young people moving to a new environment, particularly those who cannot express themselves verbally. Staff support young people to feel at home. For example, each young person has a placemat with their photograph on at mealtimes. This helps them feel comfortable sitting to eat at the table with others. The admissions process is dealt with sensitively, keeping the needs of all young people at the centre of decision-making at all times.

## 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:** SC057718

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

**Registered provider:** The Together Trust

**Registered provider address:** The Together Trust Centre, Schools Hill, Cheadle, Cheshire SK8 1JE

**Responsible individual:** Jill Sheldrake

**Registered manager:** Carmel Perry

## Inspectors

Dawn Parton, social care inspector



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