

# 1254835

**Together for Children Sunderland Limited**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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

This home, which is a limited company provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered manager has considerable experience and is suitably qualified for the position held.

**Inspection date:** 30 March 2021

## **This monitoring visit**

Due to the restrictions in place relating to the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic, this visit was carried out off site. The visit was to investigate potential breaches of regulations. The visit included a review of documents, a virtual tour of the building and discussions with a child and staff.

Staff work hard to build positive relationships with the children in their care. In turn, the children learn to trust the staff. This allows the staff to then use a therapeutic parenting approach to start to address past traumatic experiences.

There is a strong ethos of listening to and consulting with children. Children engage well in direct discussions with the staff about their feelings, views and opinions. The children's views are considered and influence their care plans and the support that they require going forward.

Children benefit from living in a positive environment that provides them with a safe and secure home. The home is decorated, personalised and furnished to a high standard throughout. More recently, the garden space has been developed to include a large seating area and summer house that has been essential during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Staff take swift action after the occurrence of all serious incidents to safeguard children. This has included implementing missing from care protocols, seeking police

intervention, health services, and calling multi-agency meetings. This has been to support, reduce and eliminate potential risks of harm to the children.

The staff are fully aware of each child's comprehensive risk assessment strategies. These are used to reduce or eliminate the presenting behaviour that puts children at risk of harm.

Constructive and well-thought-out plans have been put in place for the children moving on to new placements. This enables children to have positive endings in their current placement.

The manager has good oversight of the home, monitoring care practice, health and safety matters and record-keeping. This helps to maintain good-quality care in line with the children's home regulations. Professionals report that there is excellent partnership working and communication to ensure that decisions are made in the best interest of the children.

Action has been taken to implement the recommendation made at the last inspection. The home has a stable and experienced staff team. Staff have undertaken mandatory training. This makes sure that continuity of care can be provided by staff who have suitable knowledge.

Staff consistently report that they are well supported by the management team and their colleagues. The pandemic has not been an easy time; however, the staff state that morale is good and that they work well as a team. This is supported by good communication systems. This includes shift handovers, regular staff meetings and formal supervision.

Most staff hold a level 3 qualification in caring for children and have undertaken the essential mandatory training along with more specialist training, for example safeguarding, county lines and child sexual exploitation. However, not all staff have undertaken training in substance and alcohol misuse. This does not give all staff the knowledge and full understanding in matters that relate to some of the children currently in their care.

At the point of a new referral for a child to be admitted to the home, the management team does undertake an impact risk assessment. This gives some consideration to the needs of children currently residing at the home along with the new referral. However, deficits have been noted. The impact risk assessment lacks detail and robust consideration of all risks pertinent to each child. Therefore, the matching of children's needs does not comprehensively record that they are all compatible to live together. Several incidents and events at the home and in the community have led to some children being put at risk of harm.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2019	Full	Good
26/06/2018	Full	Good
12/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/11/2017	Full	Good

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

## Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the 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 care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.</p> <p>(Regulation 14 (1)(a) and (2)(a))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that impact risk assessments record in detail how the identified risks will be managed.</p>	28 June 2021

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. This should include all areas relating to the children's needs, specifically substance misuse and alcohol awareness. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1254835

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

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

**Registered provider address:** Stanfield Business Centre, Addison Street,  
Sunderland SR2 8SZ

**Responsible individual:** Martin Birch

**Registered manager:** Mark Christie

## **Inspector**

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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