

1183574

Registered provider: Cheshire West And Chester Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority. It is registered to care for up to four children who may experience social or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2021.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 November 2021

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: 24 October 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
30/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
31/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/06/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive individualised, high-quality care that promotes their safety and outcomes. The staff know the children and their needs well. Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff, which have strengthened more over time. Children easily identify the staff who they will approach if they have any worries.

Children were observed to have grown in confidence since the last inspection because of the care that they receive. The staff access external advice so that they can support children's emotional needs effectively, and act as good advocates to ensure that children receive support from other services.

Robust pre-admission and transition planning for children moving to the home minimises any disruption. A child said that their advice to a child moving to the home would be, 'It takes a while to get used to it [moving to a children's home for the first time], but you'll soon settle in.'

Children are making good progress in their education from their starting points. There is effective communication between the staff and education providers. This ensures that children receive the support that they need. Children who previously struggled with school attendance have achieved GCSEs. One child is now working full time, and the staff help older children to develop their independent living skills.

The staff support children well in building and maintaining relationships with their families and friends. Children's views about how often they see these important people in their lives are listened to and acted on. Children enjoy inviting their siblings and friends to the home.

The staff spend time with children to review their progress on a monthly basis. This helps children to understand their journey and experiences, and to plan how the staff can help them in future. Children are consulted on developments in the home and are central to the staff team's practice.

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

Highly effective multi-agency working means that risks to children reduce over time. The staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe and know children's individual risks and needs. Comprehensive risk assessments and management strategies are in place. Managers recognise that documents would benefit from being streamlined for ease of reference and understanding.

Children go missing less frequently. The home has been proactive in finding solutions to managing missing-from-home incidents alongside other agencies.

Children now maintain contact with the staff while away from the home. This is a positive change in behaviour.

Clear boundaries are in place for children. The staff use restorative practices to minimise the use of negative consequences in the home. Physical intervention is not required to manage children's behaviour. Direct work is used effectively to help children to understand how to improve their behaviour after incidents occur.

The staff manage any difficulties in relationships between children well, so that they improve over time. Children of different ages enjoy spending time together and some of them enjoyed a holiday with the staff for the first time.

When children refuse to engage with external services, for example to support a reduction in substance misuse, the staff remain persistent in working directly to help children understand the risks to their health.

The staff support children well when incidents occur away from the home. However, on one occasion, although staff applied first aid, they failed to seek medical advice after a child was assaulted to ensure that no additional measures were required.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a new management team leading the home. The manager and deputy have reviewed the documentation in the home and have introduced new formats which are more child friendly. The home's statement of purpose needs to be reviewed to ensure that it contains relevant information.

The experienced and stable staff team benefits from regular team meetings and access to a range of training to support children's needs. The manager recognised the need to support the staff well to minimise the impact of COVID-19 on their welfare, so that they could provide continuous care for the children.

The staff receive regular supervision. However, records do not consistently capture reflection on the staff member's practice to enhance their professional development. Individuals do not receive a signed copy of their supervision records. The workforce development plan does not fully capture further training needs to develop the professional practice of the staff team.

External stakeholders confirm good communication about children's progress and any incidents. Leaders and managers notify other safeguarding agencies when there are serious safeguarding events. However, on occasion, these are not submitted to the regulator in a timely manner.

The manager responds well to findings and recommendations from the external monitoring reports to drive forward improvements to practice in the home, including creative methods of consulting with the children. The manager's report of the quality of care provided in the home would be strengthened by consistently including the opinions of children and external stakeholders.

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, 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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	<p>19 December 2021</p>
<p>The health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, that the staff should seek advice from health professionals following incidents that may compromise children’s health and well-being.</p>	<p>19 December 2021</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that risk assessments and management plans are reviewed and recorded concisely so that any risks are easily understood and acted upon by the staff. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that the workforce development plan includes the future training needs to support the professional practice of staff. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff receive supervision that reflects on their practice and that the individual staff member has a signed copy of the record of supervision. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraphs 13.2 and 13.4)

- The registered person should ensure that the statement of purpose meets details required under Schedule 1 in full, including contact details for external complaints procedure and how to obtain relevant policies. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered person should ensure that children, the staff and external stakeholders are consulted as part of the review and report of the quality of care provided in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1183574

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cheshire West And Chester Council

Registered provider address: Cheshire West & Chester Council, Council Offices, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire CH65 0BE

Responsible individual: Judith Griffith

Registered manager: Robert Taberner

Inspector

Karen Willson, Social Care Inspector

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