

1183574

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2021.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2023

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: 10 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/11/2021	Full	Good
24/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
30/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
31/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a large home that is clean and well maintained. They can personalise their bedrooms and there are photos of children around the home. Children say that they feel safe and happy living in the home.

Staff support children to attend their education provisions. When children struggle to attend school, staff advocate on their behalf to find other suitable arrangements. This has included school staff attending the home and accessing education tutors for children. However, there is no plan in place to support any informal learning for children who are not in full-time education.

Staff provide children with a variety of activities and outings. They encourage children to remain active and take care of their health and hygiene. Staff support children to attend their health appointments and ensure that children are supported to take their medication.

Staff support children to rebuild and maintain relationships with people who are important to them. This helps children to develop positive relationships and understand their family identity. One parent said, 'I'm very grateful for everything that they (staff) do for my child.'

Staff carry out direct work sessions with children to help them understand their emotions. However, this work is often in response to an incident that has occurred. Staff do not consistently consider a more proactive approach to working with children to help them understand how to keep themselves safe.

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

Staff have a good understanding of children's needs. One professional said, 'The staff team are amazing, nothing seems to faze them they just carry on and make sure children are well cared for.'

If children go missing from care, staff take appropriate action. Incidents are infrequent. Staff regularly update children's risk management and support plans. However, these do not have specific steps for all staff to follow if incidents occur.

Staff have developed close and trusting relationships with the children in their care and have learned to recognise when children have worries. This enables staff to support children before they become overwhelmed. Staff have used physical intervention techniques to support children. However, records relating to these incidents do not consistently contain all required information, and children do not always have the opportunity to speak to someone independent.

When recruiting staff, managers follow safer recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are fully vetted and safe to work with children. This promotes a safe and healthy environment for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and suitably qualified. The manager and the deputy manager are supportive of the staff team. Staff say that managers are approachable and are open to looking at things from different perspectives and challenging their practice.

The staff team is stable and knowledgeable. Staff receive regular supervision and attend monthly team meetings, which they say are helpful. These meetings provide staff with the opportunity to reflect on their practice and develop their learning.

Staff improve their practice through regular training. The manager has a development plan in place for the staff team. All staff have an annual appraisal to assess their practice skills. However, the appraisal does not provide staff with clear direction for their professional development.

The manager does not evaluate incident forms or direct work with the children. This is a missed opportunity to identify trends and learn from practice.

The manager uses internal monitoring systems and makes good use of independent monitoring to ensure that staff provide consistently good care to the children. This oversight promotes the safety and well-being of the children.

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 ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so (“the authorised person”)—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that all records for behaviour management have all required documentation and ensure that children are spoken to by someone who was not involved in the incident to determine their feelings about this.</p>	<p>19 March 2023</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child is not in full-time education, there is a clear education timetable in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are provided with clear steps to respond to each child's individual needs and behaviours. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.14)
- The registered person should ensure that all children receive proactive direct work to help them understand how to keep themselves safe. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.7)
- The registered person should ensure that the workforce development plan and staff appraisals include 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 monitor and evaluate the children's documents, plans and graphs to identify any patterns or trends. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

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

Responsible individual: Judith Griffith

Registered manager: Robert Taberner

Inspector

Aislinn Cooper, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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