

# SC005048

Registered provider: The Partnership of Care Today

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is situated in a remote area and is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for up to eight children who may have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The registered manager holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management for residential care services for children.

The home is on the same site as a school. The inspector only inspected the social care provision.

**Inspection date:** 28 March 2023

**Date of last inspection:** 22 November 2022

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

## **Findings from the inspection**

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

### **The care of children**

Children benefit from positive relationships with the staff who care for them. They are supported by staff to build friendships with the children they live with. Staff also help children to resolve any differences through reflective discussions.

The importance of education is promoted by staff, and they ensure that children are prepared for learning. Children attend school daily and make progress. Where there are barriers to children's learning, assessments are requested by managers to help understand the child's needs.

Staff support children to access routine and emergency health services without delay. Managers recognise behaviours that could also be related to an underlying health issue and seek medical advice. However, staff do not keep accurate records of incidents to help medical professionals to identify possible patterns and trends.

Improvements to the home environment are in progress. Some areas of the home are being decorated, and new furniture for the children's bedrooms has been purchased. For children who need support in managing their bedroom space, this is not always available. For example, three children's mattresses were not covered with a sheet; this practice had previously been raised by a child's social worker. One child's belongings are not protected while their bedroom is being decorated. Other bedrooms are untidy. This practice does not help children to take pride in their home and value their belongings.

### **The safety of children**

Since the last inspection, there have been no incidents of bullying, self-harm or occasions when children are not where they are expected to be. Staff are knowledgeable about children's behaviours and how to support them, so risks are reduced.

The registered manager and staff recognise children's achievements through praise and reward systems. This motivates children to make progress in line with their plans and stages of development. Consequences are used occasionally to help children to understand behaviours that are not acceptable. However, staff's approach to using them is inconsistent and is not always relevant to the behaviour. This has the potential to confuse children and limit the effectiveness of the consequences.

The registered manager now keeps a record of actions taken in response to most safeguarding concerns. However, there have been some delays in concluding safeguarding investigations.

Responses to managing allegations are inconsistent. On one occasion, the manager shared information appropriately and is supporting investigation processes. On another occasion, the registered manager did not take sufficient action in response to a child who reported an injury that was alleged to have been caused by a staff member during a physical intervention. Furthermore, the physical intervention was not proportionate to the situation. Ofsted was not informed of the allegation, and the information shared with the safeguarding designated officer and child's social worker was minimal. This does not support professionals to make informed decisions about safeguarding concerns.

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

The registered manager has high expectations for children and understands their needs well. She forms positive relationships with children, who respond well to her nurturing approach and seek affection from her.

Children are cared for by a consistent team of staff who know them well. Staff have a good understanding of the registered manager's vision and contribute to the home's development through discussions in team meetings and individual supervision sessions.

The registered manager ensures that staff attend training to support them with their role and meet the individual needs of children who live in the home.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/09/2021	Full	Good
20/02/2020	Full	Good
15/08/2018	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>Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing—</p> <p>injury to any person (including the child); or</p> <p>serious damage to the property of any person (including the child).</p> <p>Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(2))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to identify when it is appropriate to use restraint.</p>	1 May 2023
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must maintain good oversight of all safeguarding concerns and restraints. In addition, ensure that consequences are consistently applied, that children have timely debriefs following restraint incidents and that debriefs are recorded.</p>	1 May 2023

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of children. In particular, the registered manager should have effective systems in place to monitor a child's health issue, help identify possible causes and assist in helping the child to receive support. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 34 paragraph 7.12).
- The registered person should ensure that the home environment meets children's basic day-to-day needs. In particular, staff should help children to safely store their personal belongings to prevent them from accidentally being damaged while the home is being decorated. Furthermore, staff should ensure that children's beds are made and mattresses are covered with a sheet. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7).

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC005048

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** The Partnership of Care Today

**Registered provider address:** 2nd Floor, Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,  
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

**Responsible individual:** Vivien Snape

**Registered manager:** Beverley Hancock

## Inspector

Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector

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