

1183574

Registered provider: Cheshire West and Chester council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority runs this home. It is registered to provide care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection. Both children were spoken to during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 December 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: 17 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 17/01/2023 | Full | Good |
| 10/11/2021 | Full | Good |
| 24/10/2019 | Full | Outstanding |
| 30/10/2018 | Full | Outstanding |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a safe and welcoming home. Children are able to personalise their home. One child shared that when they arrived, they felt really welcomed. This demonstrates that children feel a sense of security, safety, and ownership of their home.

Children experience positive moves into and out of the home. One child met with the manager prior to moving into the home to help with the child's transition into the home. This ensured that the child's move into the home was sensitively approached and managed. One child has recently had a positive move into foster care.

Children say that they feel happy and safe. One child has lived in the home for a significant period of time. The child said, 'Living here has been a change for the better for me.' One parent shared that their child has been able to live a normal life. This gives the child a sense of permanence and belonging.

Staff build positive relationships with the children in their care. Children's views, wishes and feelings are taken into consideration, which allows them to make choices and inform decisions about their care. The importance of children spending time with their family is understood and supported by staff. This means that children can keep in touch with the people who matter most to them.

Children make good progress in all aspects of their lives. Both children attend full time education. When children are not in education staff ensure that children have good opportunities for informal learning. This helps to bridge any gaps in education and provides positive experiences for the children.

Staff prioritise children's health and well-being. Children's health needs are understood by staff. Children are supported to attend routine and specialist appointments. Staff are supported by an external family based therapeutic service. This helps the staff to support the children's emotional health and well-being.

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

Children's risk management and care plans are regularly reviewed by the management team. They are understood and followed by staff. This ensures that staff follow the most up to date plans for each child. One social worker shared that one child is allowed to take age appropriate risks. This helps the child to grow a sense of independence and personal development.

The management team ensure that local authority documentation such as; care plans, placement plans, and delegated authority are accessible to staff. This means the staff have access to background and current information for each child. This

supports the manager to effectively guide the staff to understand and follow risk management and care plans.

Children do not routinely go missing from home. On the rare occasion that a child does go missing from home, staff are proactive and ensure that there is a robust and consistent approach. They consult with the relevant professionals and family members so that the child is returned home safely. Children have an independent return home interview. This gives an opportunity for the child to share any concerns and for carers to implement strategies to reduce the risk.

The management team ensure that therapeutic principles are embedded within the staff team and in behaviour support plans. Behaviour support plans are child focused and reflective and are written to the child. This means that if records are read later in life, they have a positive and warm aspect for the reader.

Staff are trained in physical intervention and de-escalation techniques. Physical intervention is rare and is used as a last resort. When physical intervention has occurred, the manager has reviewed the intervention and deemed the holds to be necessary and proportionate to effectively safeguard children and others. Children and staff receive a reflective de-brief following the use of physical intervention. This enables the manager to consider staff practice and if any changes in practice are required.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager holds the relevant management qualification. She is child-centred and advocates for the children in her care. Staff say that they benefit from a consistent leadership team and are positive about the manager. Staff feel supported, valued, and respected.

The management team work well with families, and professionals. This means that children benefit from a joined-up approach. One professional said, 'Staff go above and beyond for children and their communication is excellent.'

Staff are supported through regular, reflective, and robust supervision. Staff benefit from regular team meetings and have an annual appraisal. Team meetings are reflective and consider the individual needs of children. However, appraisals do not consider children's views or the views of professionals working alongside the member of staff. This is a missed opportunity for staff development.

The care children receive is regularly reviewed and tracked. Robust reviewing and monitoring systems allow the management team to quickly identify emerging themes and shortfalls. This enables the management team to respond effectively and in a timely manner to adjust plans and address shortfalls.

New staff are safely recruited to work at the home. New staff receive a thorough induction that provides them with a detailed programme of training and guidance for

their new role. This ensures that children are cared for by staff who can meet their needs.

The requirement and recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met.

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

- The registered person should ensure that appraisals consider, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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 & Chester Council, The Portal, 4 Civic Way, Ellesmere Port, Cheshire, CH65 0BA

Responsible individual: Sara Patel

Registered manager: Cherie Pendergast

Inspectors

Julie Elder, Social Care Inspector
James Meeks, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023