

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC057718
Inspector	Caroline Jones
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	The Together Trust
Registered person address	The Together Trust Centre Schools Hill CHEADLE Cheshire SK8 1JE
Responsible individual	Jill Marie Bernadette Sheldrake
Registered manager	Carmel Perry
Date of last inspection	05/06/2013

Inspection date	12/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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This is an outstanding home where young people thrive in a safe, homely and nurturing environment. This supports them in making significant progress in their lives. Young people's families and partner agencies are consistently complimentary about the service. They comment: 'I am proud of the home; staff are highly trained, experienced and professional.' Furthermore, their feedback is sought to continually improve the service to young people.

Young people are central to care planning and highly individualised placement plans ensure that they are cared for consistently according to their personal needs. Staff value each young person's uniqueness and have high aspirations for them in achieving their potential. They work effectively with young people's families and partner agencies to ensure young people are settled and enjoy living in the home. These excellent relationships are the pillars of the work with young people in making sure their needs are at the forefront of practice.

The home is effectively run by a dedicated Registered Manager and assistant manager who together set the high standards of care. Robust monitoring scrutinises the quality of care and plans are in place to improvement care practice further. Anti-discriminatory practice runs through all aspects of day-to-day care and young people are encouraged to participate in society irrespective of disability. A shortfall is

identified in relation to recruitment practice. This has not negatively impacted upon the safety or welfare of young people to-date.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is one of a number of homes operated by a charitable trust. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, physical disabilities and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/06/2013	Full	good
18/03/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
09/10/2012	Full	good
20/02/2012	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the registered person can demonstrate, including from written and electronic records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice. This relates specifically to providing detailed records of the telephone enquires relating to reference checks. (NMS 16.3 and 16.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are making very good progress in developing their individual skills, abilities and talents, which help them grow in confidence. Some young people are now attending to their personal care needs independently, having regular haircuts at the salon and choosing clothing. These are massive achievements that show real strides in learning independence skills. Furthermore, young people have made successful transitions to adult living, underpinned by robust placement planning by staff. This careful and considerate planning ensures young people are ready and prepared for change and moving on to their new placement.

Disabled young people participate in a wide range of activities of their choice including: walking, bicycle riding, swimming, day trips, youth club, awards ceremonies and holidays. They are also active in their community and attend local events such as, coffee mornings, running races and church fates. These are fine examples of young people making a positive contribution to their community. Moreover, these opportunities help to promote young people's confidence and sense of belonging in their local area.

Young people are in good health and staff promote healthy living through exercise and healthy nutrition. They are registered with a general medical practitioner, dentist and optician and have individual plans to target their health needs. Medication is stored safely and records are maintained on the administration. Recent training has taken place to ensure staff are confident and competent in administering medication to young people. All staff have a first aid qualification to ensure safer caring of young people.

Young people's behavioural needs are exceptionally well managed, consequently, they do not engage in any risk taking behaviours. They have excellent relationships with staff built on trust and respect. This provides emotional security and a sense of safety for young people to grow and develop. Staff also work closely with young people's families and partner agencies to ensure young people gain a better understanding of their personal circumstances to move forward in life.

Staff are proactive in supporting educational achievement of young people and engage with partner agencies to secure school attendance and achievement. Attendance levels are excellent and some young people are achieving excellent outcomes. However, not all young people are achieving their potential at present. This is partly due to life changes. Despite challenges staff continue to work very hard with young people's families and partner agencies to secure improvements.

Young people see their families regularly, which is fully promoted and facilitated by staff. This makes sure that young people maintain special relationships with those

significant to them. Moreover, staff are knowledgeable of the emotional impact that contact can have upon young people therefore they ensure they are sensitively supported.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people flourish in a calm, nurturing and supportive environment. Staff have a thorough understanding of young people's individual needs and placement plans are clear, detailed and subject to frequent review. Equality and diversity is well established within the home's culture and practice is underpinned by fairness irrespective of disability. Young people's families comment: 'No praise too high, the tenderness and kindness is moving, totally happy with all the staff.' It is also evident that staff have worked above and beyond their normal role in supporting young people and perceive their work as much more than a job.

Staff are committed to young people, which is evident in the warm, positive relationships they have forged with them. They know each young person's mannerisms, likes and dislikes, which ensures their wishes and feelings are foremost. Attentive and respectful care of young people was observed throughout the inspection. Staff also advocate for young people and their rights and views are promoted regularly in daily living, key worker sessions and young people's meetings. These practices help empower young people to have more control in their lives.

Young people live in a healthy environment where their physical, emotional and social wellbeing is promoted. They engage in physical and social activities and have easy access to health care services to meet their individual needs. Young people are encouraged to pursue their individual interests and staff are active in ensuring these are fulfilled, for example, young people are now enjoying swimming. The home provides a varied and balanced diet and young people's choices are respected.

Staff work constructively with education professionals communicating on a daily basis to promote young people's educational achievement. Staff emphasise the importance of education and provide learning experiences to encourage young people's education. They champion young people's needs and rights and work with partner agencies to promote learning. These practices help young people to reach their potential.

Young people live in comfortable and homely accommodation that blends into the neighbourhood. The home is clean and recently decorated to young people's tastes. Young people have their own bedrooms that are personalised and reflect their particular interests. They have indoor and outdoor sensory gardens to play and for quiet time alone. This affords respect and dignity to young people in a group living environment.

Keeping children and young people safe **outstanding**

Young people's families have a strong sense of safety for their children living at the home. They comment: 'I trust them, totally safe there, the care is outstanding.' Additionally, young people have detailed risk assessments to manage and identify risks to them appropriately. Close supervision of young people ensures that their personal safety is maintained. There are no incidents of young people missing from home or any risk taking behaviours. These care practices ensure that young people are effectively safeguarded and protected from harm.

Staff know young people exceptionally well and have developed strategies to manage their individual behaviours successfully. Regular consultation with parents offers complete transparency in the behaviour management process. Consequently, there are no physical interventions, although staff are fully trained should the need arise to safely hold young people.

Young people live in a physically safe environment where they are protected by well managed health and safety procedures. Staff carry out routine health and safety checks around the home. Safety and insurance certificates are up-to-date and plans are made with young people to ensure they are aware of an emergency evacuation route in the event of a fire.

Organisational policies are in place to promote safer recruitment practice. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and reference checks are all undertaken before any appointment of staff is made. Although, the recordings of the telephone enquiries to check out references are not sufficiently detailed to provide a thorough account of the information gained to ensure clarity. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate steps to verify visitor's identity to ensure young people are protected.

Leadership and management **outstanding**

Young people live in a home that is effectively managed in their best interests. The Registered Manager and the assistant manager make up the management team. They are well qualified and have a wealth of experience in working with young people with disabilities. The Registered Manager has been in position since March 2006 and knows the service extremely well. Together they provide clear leadership and accountability to ensure the smooth running of the home.

The service meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose and young people, staff and social workers are clear about the facilities of the home. The Registered Manager works closely with staff and young people to rigorously check their welfare, which ensures the excellent standards of care and the safety of young people. The Registered Manager leads the team successfully; therefore staff fully understand the roles and responsibilities delegated to them.

Quality assurance systems are in place to monitor and improve the care received by young people; these include monthly visits by a designated person in accordance with regulation. Furthermore, data is gathered and fully analysed to identify trends to continually improve the service to young people. The Registered Manager is clear and transparent about the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has excellent development plans in place. All significant events are notified to the relevant bodies to ensure a robust reporting process to protect young people. These practices provide the platform for continued development.

Staff are very well supported by a management team who are open about their high expectations of care practice. They stimulate the enthusiasm of the notably stable staff team who have been working at the home for a number of years. Staff are well qualified and have excellent experience of working with young people. They have regular supervision, appraisals, team meetings and training opportunities that contribute to their competence in providing high quality care to young people. Anti-discriminatory practice is a focus of the home and is discussed in daily living to ensure young people's individual needs are promoted.

Staff fully understand young people's individual needs and have high aspirations for them in achieving their full potential. Staff recordings are generally very good and provide a child centred picture of young people's daily lives. Young people's information is securely stored and shared confidentially to protect their safety and privacy.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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