

2682274

Registered provider: Vitality Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home registered in July 2022 and is part of a small private organisation. It offers care for up to three children who have experienced trauma.

This is the home's first inspection. The registered manager holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management for residential childcare.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

A brother and sister live at the home. No children have moved out. The staff welcome children sensitively, consider their initial anxieties and support them well. Children respond well to this, and they are building secure and trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. Managers are not looking to place another child in the home as they feel that this is in the best interests of the two siblings who currently live there.

Over time, the eldest child has relinquished their caring responsibilities for their younger sibling. With exceptional support from staff, this has enabled the child to begin to enjoy ordinary childhood experiences. For example, they enjoy spending time with friends in the community and visiting each other's houses.

The registered manager and staff have high expectations for children. When the children's schools were too far for them to travel to daily, the registered manager worked quickly with the children and professionals to find suitable schools closer to the home.

Since coming to live at the home, both children's attendance at school has improved and they now have 100% attendance. Children are motivated to learn and have positive career aspirations. One child attends extra booster lessons in English and mathematics, reads daily to staff and completes homework. During the inspection, another child was seen revising for their mock exams with a friend who was visiting. A child has recently enjoyed going on a school residential trip.

Staff ensure that children are registered with local health services and explain the importance of attending routine health appointments. As a result, children have overcome barriers that were preventing them from attending appointments with the dentist and optician. Recommendations raised at children's annual health assessments are acted on promptly. Children are now up to date with childhood vaccinations. One child now manages their own medication. Both children engage with weekly art therapy sessions that are delivered by a suitably qualified person. This is contributing to an improvement in their emotional well-being.

Children are encouraged to share their views and contribute to how staff care for them. One child rated the home '11 out of 10'. The other child rated it as '10 out of 10'. Children are very involved in their care planning and in decisions that affect them. Children personalise their bedrooms and plan activities that they enjoy. Activities include football, bowling and swimming. The children particularly enjoyed a trip to a theme park. Children's memories and positive experiences are captured in memory books which are carefully prepared for each child.

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

There is a strong safeguarding culture in the home, which includes listening to children's needs and allowing them to engage in age-appropriate activities. For example, one child now has a smart mobile phone, which they manage well. They also spend time with their friends in the community. Staff get to know children's friends and their parents, which helps to assure staff about who the children are spending time with. Support is tailored to meet children's individual needs. For example, while one child spends time in the community without staff needing to supervise them, the other child, who is much younger, is supervised by staff when accessing activities in the community.

Children understand online risks and feel reassured by staff checking their electronic devices, which has been agreed by children's social worker. A child spoke to staff as they were worried that a fake account had been set up using their details on a social media platform. Staff provided guidance to the child, helped them to report the concern and the account was deleted.

Trauma-informed care plans are clear. Information contained in these plans helps staff to understand how children's experiences can influence their responses to different situations. They identify behaviours and risks and guide staff on how to respond to these, using a therapeutic approach. Children benefit from living in a nurturing environment where staff provide consistent responses. As a result, children's behaviours that caused concern prior to moving to the home have reduced.

Children's positive behaviours and choices are recognised by staff through praise and rewards. This motivates children to do well and increases their confidence and self-worth. Staff have clear boundaries, and they are proactive in helping children to understand these. As a result, children know what is expected of them and they no longer present behaviours that previously caused others concern.

The registered manager ensures that staff maintain their skills in managing children's complex behaviours. During team meetings, the registered manager presents different scenarios which staff reflect on and talk about the actions they would take.

Managers implement effective safer recruitment systems to reduce the risk of children being cared for by unsuitable individuals. Three new members of staff have started working in the home since it registered with Ofsted. Children are included in the recruitment and selection process. They create their own questions that are important to them and meet with applicants under the supervision of staff. The children's feedback is considered when making decisions about who works in the home.

Health and safety issues are taken seriously and are continually assessed. As children do not present any concerns, staff spoke to them about the use of door

alarms. Children said that they do not want alarms on their bedrooms but would like them to remain in place on the external doors for security. As a result, bedroom door alarms are no longer activated at night.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Managers work exceptionally well to monitor children's experiences and progress. They are positive role models for children and staff. Children enjoy spending time with managers. After a trip to a theme park with the registered manager and head of care, the children said that they had the 'best day ever'.

The registered manager understands the importance of learning from practice. He has highly effective monitoring systems in place and is motivated to continually develop the care children receive. For example, on one occasion, staff have not followed the policy regarding recording medication administered to a child. Without delay, this was investigated and the outcome was concluded. Additional training has been sourced to ensure that the staff member is supported to develop their practice.

Highly effective partnership working means that the children's needs continue to be well understood by managers and staff. The registered manager and head of care also advocate well on behalf of children. As a result, children's care plans take account of the importance of both children continuing to live together. This means that the children's emotional well-being is supported and contributes to the excellent progress they are making.

No members of staff have left since the home registered. Children receive care from a consistent team of staff who they know well. Most staff are qualified. Plans are in place for unqualified staff to complete a relevant qualification within the timescales set out in regulation. In addition to mandatory training, staff receive training that is specific to the individual needs of the children.

There is a shared vision that focuses on children's experiences. The registered manager and staff value the regular support and training they receive from a specialist psychological service. This service has been commissioned by the provider to help staff to provide care that is trauma informed and based on the therapeutic parent model of practice.

Staff feel very well supported by the registered manager. They receive regular supervision, which they find helpful as it allows time for individual reflection on how well children are supported. In addition, supervision enables individual staff to consider how they are working as a team, share ideas and reflect on their development. Staff's views and opinions are highly valued and contribute to the success of the care children receive.

Professionals rate the home highly. The children's social worker describes the home as 'fantastic' and states that they could not rate the home any higher. A family member describes the staff as 'wonderful'. An education professional told the inspector that communication from staff is 'fantastic'.

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: 2682274

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Vitality Care Residential Limited

Registered provider address: 6 Central Avenue, Stoke-on-Trent ST2 9AR

Responsible individual: Alison Fitchford-Raji

Registered manager: William Sheldon

Inspector

Helen Malanaphy, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
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Manchester
M1 2WD

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