

2501566

Registered provider: Vitality Care Residential Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A small private provider owns this home. The home offers care for up to three children who have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager is registered with Ofsted and is experienced and suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 March 2024

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 outstanding

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2023	Full	Good
15/06/2021	Full	Good
04/03/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, one child was living in the home. There have not been any other children living in the home since the last inspection. The child has lived in the home for several years and has built positive, trusting and secure relationships with the staff who care for them. As a result, the child has become increasingly confident and willing to communicate their views, wishes and feelings. This has led to a sense of permanence and belonging for the child.

Staff understand the child's preferred methods of communication. They are still adapting approaches so they can constantly support and promote these methods, so that the child can participate fully in their daily life. For example, staff have created visual timetables and daily routine prompts to support the child's understanding of daily events. This has been especially effective in reducing the child's anxieties.

Education is promoted and, as a result, the child is now attending college every day. This has enhanced the child's learning and promoted social interactions with children of similar ages. The child is now able to participate in group activities, which is something they previously struggled with. In addition, staff are creative in supporting the child's learning, for example, through culture event nights outside college.

Staff and managers communicate well with the child's family and support the child to spend time with people who are important to them. This helps them to maintain positive relationships. One parent said, 'The managers and staff are fantastic with keeping me updated regularly. As a result, I don't worry about [name of child]. They are thriving and settled.'

The child's health needs are prioritised. The manager has actively sourced specialist services to further support the child, for example, getting an occupational therapist assessment. The manager and staff then obtained the recommended equipment to support sensory simulation for the child. The organisation's psychologist spends time with the child and staff separately. This supports the child to practise coping strategies for their emotions and helps staff to better understand the child's needs. As a result, the child can recognise and manage their emotions more independently.

The home is spacious, clean and nicely decorated. Staff have a therapeutic approach which is nurturing and supportive. This creates a family atmosphere. As a result, the child likes living in the home. However, some food snack items are stored away from the kitchen area and the child cannot access them independently. This restricts their access to such items, which is not in line with the home's family ethos.

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

Staff understand the child's needs and vulnerabilities. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed to manage risk and promote the welfare of the child. This has meant there have not been any significant incidents in the home. Additionally, the manager has worked well with partner agencies to reduce restrictions on the child which are in place as a result of a deprivation of liberty order. This has led to restrictions being reduced in a safe and managed way.

Missing-from-home incidents are infrequent. When they do occur, staff act in a well-coordinated way and follow the child's missing-from-home protocol well.

Physical interventions have reduced since the last inspection. Staff have an excellent understanding of the child's triggers and use personalised, child-centred, therapeutic practices to de-escalate incidents. Staff provide nurturing responses to the child following an intervention. This helps the child to reflect on their emotions. Staff are supported to reflect on their practice with managers and the clinical psychologist, who explores therapeutic-based reflection to help their learning.

Staff complete direct-work sessions with the child to support them to understand risks. This has been especially effective for the child to understand how to explore their identity in a safe and controlled way.

Staff understand the risks that using the internet may pose for the child, based on their vulnerabilities and complex needs. There are well-developed strategies and monitoring systems to keep the child safe. Innovative, child-friendly safety plans help the child to understand online risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

An experienced and suitably qualified manager manages the home, supported by an equally experienced and knowledgeable head of care. Managers and leaders share ambitious visions for the child. They have high expectations of staff to promote high standards of individualised care.

The manager actively challenges and advocates on behalf of the child, for example, seeking the right services to support the child, obtaining their care plan and working collaboratively to reduce risks.

A stable staff team provides consistent care and stability for the child. Staff show dedication and are child-focused and committed. They said they feel extremely well supported by the manager and that the home is a positive environment to work in.

The manager has developed the therapeutic practice in the home since the last inspection. Children's care records have been streamlined as a result. This has improved staff's daily recording, which reflects the child's everyday life and the work that is carried out with them.

Staff receive substantial training from the start of their employment. They have completed additional specialist training that is specific to the child's needs. In addition, staff receive training from a clinical psychologist to help them implement care that is therapeutic and trauma informed, for example, around sensory needs and processing differences and needs. This ensures staff have high-level skills and knowledge to support them in providing exceptional care and support to the child.

Safer recruitment processes and practices are adhered to when new staff are recruited. All necessary checks are undertaken, which helps to reduce the risk that unsuitable adults are employed in the home. The child is actively involved in the recruitment process, when they ask the applicant questions of their choice. This supports the child to feel valued and enables them to get to know the adults before they care for them.

The managers carry out regular and inspiring supervisions with their staff. These are child-focused, reflective and support staff development. Supervision provides staff with additional opportunities to reflect on their practice and training needs. In addition, this supports the manager to review and adapt practices effectively when improvements are required.

Managers carry out regular audits and have robust monitoring systems in place. This allows them to have oversight of all aspects of the running of the home.

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

- The registered person should ensure that snacks are available to children and not stored where children cannot access them independently. This is part of creating a homely environment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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: 2501566

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: Steven Brentnall

Inspector

Joanne Humphreys, Social Care Inspector

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