

# 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.

The registered manager holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management for residential childcare.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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

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

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:** 21 March 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2023	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

Since the last inspection, the same two children, who are siblings, remain living in the home. They have developed secure relationships with the manager and staff; the children consider them to be part of their extended family. These positive relationships and the strong support children receive enable children to develop a strong sense of belonging.

Leaders and managers ensure that children are consulted about their future care plans. They arrange for them to speak with an advocate when they are worried about plans that will affect their living arrangements.

The provider ensures that staff receive support to enable them to provide care that is informed by research. Staff understand and apply trauma-informed models of care. The manager works in collaboration with a clinical psychologist to develop individualised care plans. These plans help staff to understand the effects of trauma and provide strategies for meeting the needs of each child.

Staff help children to understand the importance of attending school. Children's significantly improved attendance at school has been sustained, and they are motivated to achieve academic success. One child has successfully moved from primary school to secondary school. The manager was instrumental in this success as he appealed the school's admission decision to offer the child their third-choice school. As a result, the child now attends his first-choice school, where their sibling attends. There is highly effective communication between teachers and staff. This strengthens the support children receive and contributes to their positive learning experiences.

Children have excellent routines, which support them to manage their personal hygiene well. They are in good physical health and attend routine health appointments. Discussions between staff and children help them to understand their emotional and physical health. For example, one child spoke about changes to their oral health routines following an appointment with an orthodontist.

Children continue to meet weekly with an art therapist who visits the home. This provides children with a safe space to explore their thoughts and feelings. They are very well supported to develop strategies that help them manage their emotional well-being.

staff provide children with opportunities to explore sensitive topics such as sexual health and relationships. These are effective and help children develop an understanding of their own development. People who are important to children speak highly of the care children receive. One relative said, 'The care provided is faultless; both children's individual needs are met, and for the first time in their lives,

they are safe and happy.' Two people who are not involved in the operation of the home describe the care provided as 'phenomenal'.

Managers and staff ensure that children keep in touch with people who are important to them. Staff recognise that children have different experiences and encourage them to be sensitive towards each other. At Halloween, children decorated the home and invited some of their family and friends to a Halloween party. Staff support children to develop positive friendships, and they establish links with the parents of the children's friends. This helps them to understand the children's friendship network.

Children's talents and interests are promoted. One child is now a valued member of a local football team. They have won awards for being player of the match, which has a positive impact on their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Both children are very settled and feel safe. It is rare that they display behaviours that are challenging. Positive reinforcement is used by staff who regularly recognise children's achievements. Risks continue to be well managed, and the children's excellent progress has been sustained. Children are helped to develop strategies to support their emotional well-being. As a result, there has been a further reduction in risk relating to self-harm.

The manager works well with the children's social worker to enable children to manage age-appropriate risks. For example, children have individual plans that provide staff with guidance about how to help them spend time in the community safely. This helps children to develop their independence and have similar experiences as other children they go to school with. When children have experienced difficulties in the community, the manager responded promptly and shared information with relevant professionals.

Internet safety is taken seriously. All staff have completed e-safety training. They speak to children about the risks associated with accessing the internet. Permission from the children and their social worker has been obtained for a safety app to be installed on the children's mobile phones. This helps staff to ensure that the children are not exposed to online risks. It also enables the children to send staff their location if they are away from the home and need support.

Bullying is actively discouraged, and children are encouraged by staff to be respectful and kind to others. They sensitively speak with children to help them to understand how their actions might affect others. Through this process, children are supported to become more self-aware and this also helps them to manage friendships better.

There have been no occasions when children have been missing from home or displayed behaviours that require staff to use physical intervention.

One new staff member has started working in the home. The children were involved in the interview and recruitment process. The manager has safe recruitment systems in place that reduce the risk of children being cared for by unsuitable individuals.

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

Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent team of staff who know them extremely well. Through regular training and consultation with a clinical psychologist, staff are continually developing their knowledge and skills specific to the children who live in the home. The manager ensures that the staff receive training on topics that support them in their roles. Most staff are qualified, and those who are not are working towards achieving the relevant qualification.

There are highly effective monitoring systems in place. This helps the manager to understand the home's strengths and areas that can be developed. Learning through monitoring is shared with staff and supports continued improvements in the quality of care provided to children.

The manager has a clear vision for the home and has high aspirations for children. He is child-centred and committed to children and the staff team. Positive feedback from children, family members and professionals who support children is received by the manager, who uses this information to continue with practices that support children to thrive.

Staff receive exceptional support from the manager. They receive regular supervision and have their performance appraised annually. These meetings provide opportunities for individuals to reflect on their practice and how they contribute to the positive experiences children have.

Monthly team meetings provide an opportunity for staff to gather and formulate plans for children that will enable them to succeed. This practice helps staff to provide consistent care to children.

The environment is maintained and furnished well, and the children's bedrooms are personalised. The manager, staff and children are welcoming to visitors, and this creates an atmosphere in the home where people want to spend time.

## **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 Dunn, Social Care Inspector

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