

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 is run by a private organisation. The home provides care for up to three children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The manager is appropriately qualified and is registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 5 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
21/03/2023	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home. Since the last inspection, no children have moved into the home and no children have moved out.

The home environment is welcoming, homely and kept to a high standard. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their own taste. Photos of the children enjoying activities or in their school uniform are on display in the downstairs living area. Throughout the inspection, the children were observed to be relaxed and comfortable in the home.

The children have made considerable progress since moving into the home. This is particularly apparent with their education and emotional well-being. Staff are proactive in building relationships with education professionals to support children. For one child, this has encouraged stability and significant improvement in their attendance and academic engagement.

Staff have supported the children to manage uncertainty around their future exceptionally well. When the placing authority did not give clear information to the children about their care plans, staff advocated for them and the manager escalated the matter. An advocate has been made available to the children, and staff have encouraged the children to engage. The children said that the advocate has been very helpful for them.

Staff have excellent relationships with children. Children like to be in the company of staff and feel accepted by them. During the inspection, many positive interactions took place between staff and children. Staff celebrate children's achievements and take pride in their progress.

Health plans are regularly reviewed. Staff support children to attend health appointments, including for mental health. Staff help children to learn about keeping themselves healthy and safe. For example, recent discussions have focused on puberty, sexual health, the risk of using cannabis, and appropriate relationships.

Children are encouraged to engage in hobbies and activities. These are recognised by staff as being beneficial for physical and emotional well-being. One child is passionate about football. Staff ensure they are present at training and matches to show the child that their interests are of value to them.

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

The manager and staff are highly motivated to improve the lives of children. Planning is effective and thorough. Staff understand children's vulnerabilities and are committed to keeping children safe. Comprehensive risk assessments for children are reviewed and updated regularly.

There have been no instances of physical intervention. There is a low number of incidents for children at the home. Children are receptive to staff's use of de-escalation strategies to help them calm down. Strong relationships between staff and children enhance children's sense of trust in staff. They feel safe. Feedback from a family member identified how staff show kindness and compassion to children.

When children go missing from the home, there is a well-coordinated response from staff. Procedures are followed and staff work collaboratively with external agencies. Debriefs are carried out with the child in a timely manner. Staff are sensitive to the emotional impact of such situations on children and offer empathy and non-judgmental care.

Internet safety is taken seriously. Staff implement boundaries consistently and carry out checks on devices even when the identified risks are low.

Children are supported to take risks appropriate to their age and level of understanding. A child whose care plan is to move to semi-independence has been supported by staff to develop and accomplish independent living skills, such as cooking, shopping, budgeting, self-care and taking public transport.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Managers and leaders are dedicated to the success of the home. They are fully committed to supporting children to flourish. Managers have developed excellent relationships with partner agencies. Feedback from professionals is positive and asserts that the quality of care provided to children, and communication from the home, is of high quality.

There is a core staff team, whose members know the children well. Agency staff are rarely used and there are no vacancies. The manager is aspirational for their team and proactively invests in their development. Mandatory training is completed by all staff. Training is enhanced by workshops delivered by clinical practitioners that are bespoke to the needs and presenting behaviours of the children living in the home.

Managers actively promote research-based practice. Models and theory, for example the Window of Tolerance and the Polyvagal theory, are incorporated into documentation to support and prompt staff to be inquisitive about the emotional basis for children's expressed behaviours. When asked, a staff member was able to explain the meaning of one such model and how it helps them to think about the child's experience. This practice helps staff work more effectively with children, leading to fewer incidents and better outcomes for children.

A clinical practitioner provides regular consultations with staff. This encourages staff to exercise curiosity towards the emotions that underpin children's presenting behaviours. This enhances the team's understanding of children's needs.

Comprehensive and effective monitoring systems enable managers and leaders to have thorough oversight of the home. Managers and leaders are present in the home and are readily available to support or advise staff in their roles. Staff consistently express feeling valued and encouraged by the manager.

Managers and leaders genuinely care about the welfare of staff. They recognise the impact of staff's well-being on practice. Training in mental health first aid has enhanced managers' understanding of how to care for staff, and this is actively promoted. One member of staff recounted how earnestly they were supported by managers during a family crisis.

The company has development plans that are progressing in a planned way. However, managers are child focused and prioritise the stability of the home in their planning.

No requirements or recommendations have been made at this inspection.

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

Becky Rutter, Social Care Inspector

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