

1271135

Registered provider: Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home is registered to care for up to five children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 15 February 2018.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 June 2018

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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The home registered in February 2018 and this is the first inspection.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— - helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and - promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— - use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(h))	01/08/2018
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)(c))	01/08/2018
The registered person must ensure that— - within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— - the name of the child; - details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; - the date, time and location of the use of the measure; - a description of the measure and its duration; - details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; - the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; - the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; - within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—	01/08/2018

has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii) and (c)(iv))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry.(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) This particularly refers to ensuring that copies of young people's local authority care plans, education health and care plans and personal education plans are on file and accessible to staff.	01/08/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that where a placing authority does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs. Staff should act as champions for their children, expecting nothing less than a good parent would. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8) This particularly refers to challenging local authorities in relation to any barriers which restrict young people from having contact with their families.
- Ensure that each child's day to day health and well-being needs are met. Staff should work to make the children's home an environment that support children's physical, mental and emotional health, in line with the approach set out in the home's Statement of Purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3) This particularly refers to ensuring that placement plans provide staff with clear guidance on how best to promote the individual health needs of young people.
- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, risk management plans, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) This particularly refers to ensuring that risk management plans include the details of the personalised strategies used to help young people to regulate their emotions.
- Ensure that staff work with the placing authority and new placements to ensure that each child's transition is planned and help each child to prepare for leaving

both practically and emotionally. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9) This particularly refers to ensuring that there are clear and detailed plans in place that outline how young people will achieve their agreed transition plans.

- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulations. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Enthusiastic staff provide young people with the guidance and support they need to make good progress from their starting points, in respect of their emotional, behavioural and educational development.

Staff work collaboratively with schools to ensure that all young people are accessing education. For some young people, this is a remarkable achievement given previous patterns of entrenched poor attendance.

Young people have developed trusting and affectionate relationships with staff. This helps provide young people with a sense of security and stability. This ensures that young people feel safe and well cared for. Staff work hard to provide young people with consistent and reliable care. An independent reviewing officer told the inspector that one young person was thriving because he was given 'clear routines, boundaries and structure'.

Staff give young people lots of opportunities to express their views and shape the care that they receive. For example, young people are meaningfully involved in reviewing their placement plans and agreeing how best staff can help them. In some instances, placement plans do not provide staff with clear guidance about young people's individual emotional and physical health needs. The impact of this is low, as staff have a shared knowledge of how best to meet young people's health needs.

Young people are supported to develop the skills they need for adulthood. For one young person, this has included improving basic self-care skills, such as brushing their teeth and having regular showers.

Staff's planning for transitions out of the home is not well coordinated. This is because, in some instances, young people's social workers do not involve staff in the planning for such moves. For example, plans to support one young person's return to foster care appear disjointed. Specifically, the young person has learned of a potential move in advance of this agreement being formalised. This has the potential to erode the young person's trust in staff.

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

Staff are reflective and dynamic in their approach to managing risk. For example, a well-considered increase in free time has helped one person to feel trusted and to take responsibility for her own actions. This has had a remarkable impact on her vulnerability, with a reduction in risk-taking behaviours. However, written risk assessments are of variable quality. For example, one document did not include known de-escalation strategies to help a young person manage their feelings of anxiety. Despite this, in the main, risk assessments provide staff with sufficient guidance on how to keep young people safe.

In some isolated instances, staff have not adhered to the home's behaviour management approach. This has contributed to the need to use physical interventions for some young people. However, the manager has taken swift and decisive action to address this. It is clear that staff are now working consistently and effectively to manage young people's behaviours.

When young people go missing, staff take the necessary actions to minimise the risk to young people. Staff's knowledge of young people means that they are able to locate young people swiftly and ensure their safe return. Furthermore, staff take steps to understand why young people have felt the need to go missing and are proactive in addressing identified issues.

The registered manager has not always challenged the delay in young people having return interviews following missing incidents. This is because of a lack of understanding of the timescales for such reviews to be completed. This has not had any direct impact on the safeguarding of young people.

On one occasion, the recording of medication administered by staff was not accurate. The manager's internal audits had failed to identify this error. There was no direct impact for young people, although this had the potential to result in harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager is an experienced and knowledgeable individual. Her dynamism is both infectious and impressive. The registered manager shows genuine dedication and commitment to developing the home.

Despite this, it is evident that the registered manager's responsibility for a second children's home, as well as other responsibilities in the local authority, is having an impact upon her capacity to provide consistent and effective leadership.

The manager has a good understanding of the areas of improvement required. However, she has not yet been able to address the identified shortfalls. For example, the registered manager has not ensured that records of physical intervention are completed accurately and in the required timescales.

Similarly, the registered manager has not ensured that key documents, such as young people's care plans and education, health and care plans, are on file. This has not had a significant impact on care planning for young people.

Staff are consistent in their praise for the registered manager, whom they feel is highly supportive. The registered manager uses supervision as an effective tool to address staff performance and review the quality of care provided to young people. However, in isolated incidents the registered manager has not recorded completed supervisions.

Staff work closely with a range of partner agencies, including the police, schools and social workers. In most cases, staff are effective at working collaboratively with partner agencies to meet the needs of young people. However, constructive challenge is not always good enough. For example, staff have been slow to address delays in one young person having contact with their family.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1271135

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider address: Stockport Metropolitan Borough Council, Town Hall,
Stockport, Cheshire SK1 3XE

Responsible individual: Jeanette Warburton

Registered manager: Laura Hopkinson

Inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

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