

2597567

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated and managed by a local authority. It was registered in July 2020 and provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2022.

There were three children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 April 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 8 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/05/2023	Full	Good
18/10/2022	Full	Good
25/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress from their starting points due to the care and encouragement that they receive from staff. This is due to staff having a good understanding of each child's individual needs and vulnerabilities and what support the children require to achieve. In addition, the home's care plan for each child is bespoke, goal orientated and reviewed on a regular basis to identify progress that the child has made. This allows for new goals to be set and helps children to understand and celebrate their achievements.

Staff promote the children's sense of belonging and stability. The home environment is personalised to the tastes of the children, and this fosters a sense of ownership among the children. Moreover, the staff spend time with children and show a genuine interest in the children's welfare.

All the children were spoken to. One child said that they feel that the staff respect him, make him feel valued and that they love him. The child also said that he feels this way because the staff include him, check on him and spend time with him. They said, 'The staff act like this is their own family.' Another child rated the home 'eight out of 10' and spoke about how the staff are 'helpful' and 'listen' to them.

Children's needs arising from their culture and religion are respected and promoted by staff. For one child, the staff supported them during a period of religious observance by cooking meals early in the morning, so the child had something nutritious to break their fast with.

Staff are committed to ensuring that the children are in good health through supporting them to attend routine and specialist appointments. This has helped one child to start to attend dental appointments. Staff also support children to make progress with their learning and education through driving the children to school and having good working relationships with education providers. This has helped two of the children to re-engage with education, and both children are now looking forward to completing their exams and going to college.

Children's views are actively ascertained by staff and shared with external professionals where necessary. Staff also encourage children to attend key meetings, such as their statutory reviews. Where children are reluctant to attend such meetings, their wishes and feelings are represented by the staff or through an independent advocate. This supports children to be involved in making decisions about their day-to-day lives and their longer-term plans.

Staff provide children with a range of activities that they are interested in. Furthermore, staff also support children to spend time with those that matter the most to them, such as family and friends.

Children are supported by staff to develop valuable life skills in line with their age, stage of development and ability. For example, children are guided by staff to acquire independent living skills, such as cooking healthy meals, self-care, budgeting, navigating their way around the local community and understanding road safety.

Staff welcome children into the home in a planned way. One child's social worker stated that before the child moved into the home, the staff visited the child and supported the child's move into the home. Staff helped the child to choose the colour scheme for their bedroom and to make their bedroom feel personal. This helped relieve some of the anxiety about a move of home so that the child could quickly settle. Equally, when children move on from the home, this is done in a planned way. Staff have stayed connected with one child that has moved on and have supported this child to maintain their friendship with another child living in the home.

Professionals and parents who were spoken to share a positive view of the staff, the care they provide and how this is helping children to do well in life. However, the parents spoken to remarked that the communication from staff could be improved on.

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

Children feel safe living in the home. They feel able to talk to staff if they have any worries or concerns and expressed confidence in the staff helping them. One child described the home as a 'safe place for children to live because it is secure' and that staff check in with children to make sure that they are okay when they are out in the community.

Staff's understanding of each child's vulnerabilities is good. Staff also have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. This means that staff can respond quickly and appropriately when there are concerns about a child's safety and well-being. For example, when children go missing or are absent from care, staff search for the child and work with external professionals, such as the police, to secure the child's safe return home. Where there are concerns in respect of exploitation, staff work closely with external professionals to reduce risks to the child.

Incidents involving the children in the home and in the community are managed well by staff. When incidents have occurred, the staff have conversations with the child to support them to understand risks and make safer decisions. In addition, staff debriefs following incidents support staff well-being and learning.

The staff have a good understanding of the models of care used in the home. This helps staff work in partnership with each other to promote a home environment that helps children understand expectations in relation to behaviour and to help them feel safe and thrive.

Safer recruitment practices are followed by the registered manager when employing new staff. This reduces the risk of unsuitable adults working in the home.

While the plans in place for children are individual to their specific vulnerabilities and identify known risks, more could be done to ensure that these plans accurately reflect the level of risk. This will help to avoid any confusion among the staff in respect of what they need to be worried about and will promote accountability.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. She is supported by a suitably qualified and experienced deputy manager. They have a shared ambitious vision for children and the service. The registered manager and deputy manager have high expectations of themselves and their staff. Where there are concerns about staff practice, they take quick action to address shortfalls. The registered manager and deputy manager are visible in the home, and the staff team has confidence in them.

Leaders and managers have worked at pace to address the shortfalls identified during the last inspection and are committed to continue their improvement journey. The registered manager and deputy manager have good oversight of the home and understand what is working well and what needs to improve.

Managers have a good understanding of the positive impact that a stable, committed and skilled staff team has on children's experience and progress. They ensure that any vacancies are quickly filled and provide support and development opportunities for staff through training, regular reflective supervision and staff meetings. Consequently, the staff working in the home feel valued and confident in being able to meet the needs of the children they care for, and staff morale is good.

The commitment of the registered manager to multi-agency working has helped to support children to get the right support at the right time. External professionals were overwhelmingly positive when speaking about the working relationship that they have with the registered manager and staff.

The children's case records are written in a sensitive and child-friendly way and overall help children to understand their time in the home. However, some case records contain inaccuracies and are not always signed and dated by the author. This shortfall does not help children to fully understand how and when they have been helped by staff.

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, The 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))	31 May 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Children's records need to be accurate and must be dated and clearly identify the author of the record. This will support children to understand how and when they have been helped by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)
- The registered person should have a key role in developing the home's effective working relationships with each child's placing authority and with other relevant persons, including parents. This specifically relates to effective communication with children's parents. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3)

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: 2597567

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham S60 1AE

Responsible individual: Jane Wood

Registered manager: Rebecca Briggs

Inspector

Shirin Khan, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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