

2599994

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a solo-bedded home. It is owned and run by a local authority. It provides medium- to long-term care for children with social and emotional difficulties. It was registered in July 2020. The manager was registered at the same time.

Inspection date: 1 February 2022

Date of last inspection: 1 September 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Since the full inspection, little or no progress has been made in respect of addressing identified shortfalls. As such, the requirements made have not been met and will be raised again.

Court-imposed restrictions that are intended to keep children safe prevent them from leading a typical teenage lifestyle. Despite this, children do have some positive experiences with staff, although this does not compensate for the lack of social interaction with peers of their own age. Given the children's ages, they feel that going out with adults identifies them as 'children in care', which deters them from taking all the opportunities for fun activities and entertainment that are offered to them.

Children receive home-based education. However, as this is only on a part-time basis, this does have an impact on the progress the children make. Children say they are happy with the amount and form of education, and as it mirrors the children's interests this helps to keep them motivated to learn. One child has a special flair for art, and this has resulted in their work being accepted for public display.

Children are supported to spend time with people who are important to them, but this cannot always be spontaneous due to challenges in managing this safely. A wish to see family sometimes prompts children to leave the home and go missing in order to spend unauthorised time with family. Staff follow plans to return children quickly and safely, but sometimes there is uncertainty over where children have been or who they have been with. Due to children's complex needs, this means they are vulnerable when not under staff supervision.

Staff are supporting children to have increased freedom and less supervision, so they learn how to be independent and manage everyday activities safely. The intention is to do this in line with plans devised by social care professionals and in collaboration with the children. However, not all staff take the same approach which is confusing for children. The lack of regular team meetings and group discussions contributes to staff interpreting or not implementing the plan consistently. The manager is aware of this, but measures taken to improve consistency have yet to be effective.

Children have had access to concerning items like lighters and glue, and there is a lack of clarity about how they have obtained these. The incident was not notified to the regulator at the time. Staff do have strategies to minimise the children's access to such potentially harmful items, but on the day of the inspection there were rocks,

a loose concrete post, and pieces of sharp metal in the garden. As children have previously threatened, or tried, to harm themselves, these items were not identified as potentially hazardous and removed.

The manager has tried very hard to develop the team into one that is aspirational and motivated to provide the best care for children. However, there is a lack of ownership and accountability from some individuals around completing tasks. Basic health and safety tasks that protect the children and staff are sometimes overlooked. For example, fire safety checks are still not being reliably completed, which means there is insufficient reassurance that systems to alert staff to a fire are fully functioning.

The manager has a plan to address shortfalls, but staff sickness and other absence has been a hindrance to this. Over half of the staff members are subject to capability and improvement processes. The morale of the team is low, and staff say they do not feel supported by their colleagues or leaders. This does not support a welcoming home environment for children.

The children's complex needs require a high level of knowledge, skill and expertise from staff. However, training specific to safeguarding children that has been identified for completion by the whole staff team has not yet been completed. This does not provide assurances that staff can implement the details as required in the children's plans. There are also gaps in supervision, which limits opportunities for leaders to check out staff's understanding and competency.

Staff say there is no cohesion within the team, and this contributes to inconsistent application of the court order and care plan linked to the child living in the home. This ultimately could compromise the progress that children make.

One strength of the home is that there is regular liaison with the wider group of professionals who support the children. Since the last inspection, the clinical group supervision provided to the team by a psychologist is now attended by more staff. This helps staff to have a better understanding of some of the children's behaviours.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 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— have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iii)(b)(d)) This refers to staff delivering care in line with the court order, ensuring that fire checks are carried out in line with the home's policy, and ensuring that the home is kept free from hazardous items, including in the garden area.	13 March 2022
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— ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;	13 March 2022

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(e)(f)) This refers to disseminating information from other professionals, including the home's psychologist, and multi-agency meetings to staff and checking their understanding and application of this. It also refers to holding regular well-documented team meetings and individual supervision sessions in line with the provider's policy. The registered person should ensure that all staff complete training in self-harm and exploitation.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	13 March 2022

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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: 2599994

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Registered provider address: The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull HU1 2AA

Responsible individual: Michele Colthup

Registered manager: Charlene Martin

Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022