

SC005040

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A large provider of children's services operates this home. The home provides care for up to four children who have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2012 and is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 March 2023

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 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/09/2021	Full	Good
12/09/2019	Full	Good
08/01/2019	Full	Good
21/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, no children have moved into the home and three children have moved out. At the time of the inspection, there had been no children living in the home for six months. For the purposes of this inspection, the inspector considered the experiences and progress of the three children who had lived in the home since the last inspection.

Children who lived at the home developed trusting relationships with staff who cared for them. Children knew they could talk to staff if they had any worries or concerns. This caring and supportive environment enabled children to make progress and have positive experiences of living in the home.

Most of the children had positive experiences when moving out of the home. Staff ensured that children had well-planned transitions. For example, before moving to their new homes, staff supported children to visit the home to see what it was like and to meet the staff. One child has moved into another home in the same organisation and staff who knew the child moved with them to work there. These practices support children to reduce their anxieties and settle into their new home.

Staff have prioritised children's health needs. They supported children to access specialist mental health services and sought support from medical professionals when required. Staff worked with children to help them to understand their diagnoses. This promoted positive health outcomes for the children.

Staff have supported children to achieve in their education and learning. Most children who lived in the home were in full-time education. Staff worked well with education professionals to support children who were not in education.

Children were supported to maintain their relationships with their families and friends. Staff helped one child to gain access to an advocate when they were unhappy that they were unable to see their sibling. Support from the advocate assisted in the child having regular contact with their sibling.

Children were regularly consulted by staff about their feelings and day-to-day experiences. However, managers did not always provide feedback to the children. As a result, children may not always have been able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on.

Staff helped children to build confidence, develop increased independence and to improve their independent living skills. One child got a part-time job and another child was supported by staff to develop their skills around budgeting and household task management. This helped the children to prepare for moving into semi-independent accommodation.

The home is clean and freshly decorated. Staff supported children to personalise their bedrooms. Children participated in decorating the home. This helps children to feel comfortable and gain a sense of belonging.

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

Managers and staff knew the children who lived in the home well. They understood their needs and risks, and the action they needed to take to keep children safe. There were times when children displayed behaviours that were challenging. Staff managed most of these periods well. Overall, incidents reduced.

Staff have taken prompt and appropriate action when children have gone missing from home. They followed missing-from-home procedures to ensure that children were quickly located. Staff helped children to understand the risks of going missing and how to keep themselves safe. Multi-agency meetings were held when required, to support children to keep safe and reduce missing-from-home incidents.

Physical interventions were only used as a last resort. The registered manager reviews all incidents to identify learning for staff and children. As a result, the manager is confident that interventions are necessary and proportionate and are learned from.

Consequences were used regularly to help children to understand the results of their actions. Generally, this promoted positive outcomes for children. However, occasionally, the consequences used have been excessive and not restorative in nature. For example, staff required a child to pay £177 for damage to property. Managers did not review this effectively. They failed to consider if the consequence was proportionate and effective.

Management oversight recorded across children's records promotes reflection and learning to improve staff practice in the home. However, some records do not detail all the actions staff have taken to respond to children's needs. This is needed to ensure that care is challenged and children receive care in line with their care plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Since the last inspection, the team has experienced significant changes. Several staff left, which impacted on the ability of the team to safely care for children. Leaders and managers took the decision to close the home while a new staff team was recruited. There are now plans to slowly reintroduce children back into the home.

The home is managed by a caring and compassionate manager who has been in post for over 10 years. She knows the home well and has a thorough understanding of the home's strengths and is realistic about the areas for development, particularly in relation to staffing. She is well regarded by staff and professionals.

The manager has systems in place for monitoring the quality of care children receive. She uses these effectively, along with the independent visitor reports and development plans, to support the continual development of the home.

The manager supports staff well. When the home was operating, staff received regular practice-related supervision and annual appraisals. Team meetings were reflective and supported the team to develop consistent care for children. The training staff received was excellent. This means staff feel valued and supported to develop in their roles. It also ensures that children are looked after by knowledgeable and skilled staff who can meet their needs.

The manager normally informs Ofsted when there are safeguarding concerns. However, on two occasions, the manager failed to notify Ofsted about a safeguarding concern. While this did not impact on children, it meant the regulator may not have had all the relevant information to understand what was happening in the home.

The manager and staff have good relationships with external professionals, who speak positively about the standard of care children received. The manager challenges those professionals who are not meeting the children's needs effectively.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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
No measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable, or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. The following measures may not be used to discipline any child— imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation. (Regulation 19 (1) (2)(f)) This specifically relates to managers ensuring that the use of any consequence is reasonable and proportionate.	4 May 2023
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. A notification made under this regulation—	4 May 2023

must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies, or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; and must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. This specifically relates to ensuring records clearly detail all the actions staff have taken to de-escalate incidents. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that when consulting children on their views about the home's care, children receive feedback. This ensures children can see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 22, paragraph 4.11)

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: SC005040

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: 2nd Floor, Lansdowne House, 85 Buxton Road,
Stockport, Cheshire SK2 6LR

Responsible individual: Vivien Snape

Registered manager: Emma Coen

Inspector

Sonia Sullivan, Social Care Inspector

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