

# SC023636

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to 10 children. The statement of purpose says that the home is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing therapeutic care and treatment along with family support to psychologically traumatised children.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 7 September 2022.

### Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |      |
|-------------------------------------------|------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | good |
|-------------------------------------------|------|

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

**Date of last inspection:** 14 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 14/03/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 20/02/2020      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 14/11/2018      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 28/06/2017      | Full            | Outstanding          |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The therapeutic model of care provided by the home is thoroughly embedded in practice. This ensures that children receive consistent care, which helps them to develop a sense of stability and security. The staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the emotional needs of the children, protect them from harm and maintain appropriate boundaries within the large group of lively, active children.

There is a strong commitment to listening to the views of the children and consulting with them on how they like to be cared for. This is demonstrated in the various group meetings the children attend, including community meetings and girls and boys groups. The children engage enthusiastically with these group meetings and see these as an opportunity to resolve any difficulties in the group and make plans for special events, activities and outings.

Over time, many of the children make significant progress across many aspects of their lives. The children develop new social skills as they learn to navigate group living and sharing with their peers. The professionals consulted during this inspection spoke about the significant progress children make in managing their anxieties and associated behaviour. A social worker spoke about the child she works with and said, '[Name of child] has become more mature and is now able to hold a conversation with me.'

The children make significant progress in terms of their educational engagement and attainment. This can be attributed to the careful planning that goes into inducting the children into the organisation's school. Children who have previously refused school or failed to settle in an educational setting now speak enthusiastically about what they have learned or what new interests or skills they have acquired.

The home provides the children with an excellent range of resources to support their emotional well-being and begin to overcome past trauma. All the children engage in some form of therapeutic counselling, both in group and individual settings. The day-to-day care of the children is based on a full assessment of the child's psychological needs. The staff have regular access to specialist advice on how to respond to any concerns they may have regarding a child's presentation or behaviour.

Equal importance is given to meeting the children's physical health needs. The children have detailed healthcare plans, which are implemented in practice. All the children are assessed by a dietician and any dietary needs are catered for. A sensitive and nurturing approach is taken to supporting children with medical conditions that may result in them needing guidance around maintaining their personal hygiene.

The children have lots of fun at this home. They have a wide, open space in which to ride their bicycles and play on the outdoor play equipment. Many activities are arranged in the home, and children are also encouraged to join outside clubs and teams. The children speak fondly about the holidays they have been on over the summer. For most of the children, these were new and exciting experiences that will be remembered for a long time.

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

The children build trusting relationships, and, in many cases, strong attachments with the staff caring for them. Over time, the children develop the confidence to begin talking about their past negative experiences. The staff respond sensitively when this occurs. They take effective action to ensure that any associated safeguarding concerns are shared with senior members of staff and the relevant external safeguarding professionals.

The children feel safe at the home and speak about the steps that the staff take to ensure that any disputes within the children's group are resolved. The staff have a clear understanding of each child's vulnerabilities and how their anxieties are likely to affect their behaviour. Each child has a detailed behaviour management plan with clear guidance on how staff should respond to challenging situations. The use of physical intervention to manage behaviour is proportionate and monitored closely by the management team. Although thorough debriefs take place with staff following a physical intervention, these are not always completed within the required time frame.

The home has not been consistently well maintained, which has resulted in some avoidable hazards not being promptly addressed. Some fixtures and fittings were in a poor state of repair and a television in a child's bedroom was not positioned safely. The mechanism on one fire door was not in working order. These issues had all been addressed by the end of this inspection.

Overall, there is a good standard of risk management. The children's individual risk assessments clearly summarise how and why the children could place themselves at risk of harm, and there are effective strategies in place to reduce the level of risk. In one case, there had been no assessment of how a child should be kept safe when travelling in a vehicle. The child's circumstances indicate that a risk assessment should have been carried out. The impact risk assessments which are carried out prior to a new child moving into the home would also benefit from a stronger focus on how children's individual behaviours could affect their peers.

There have been several examples of the children disclosing historical abuse that they experienced prior to moving to the home. Prompt and effective action has been taken by the staff. The children have received a caring, nurturing response to their disclosures. The registered manager is tenacious in ensuring that the relevant external safeguarding professionals act on the information that the children have provided. In some cases, this has resulted in new child protection investigations being initiated.

Any allegations made against the staff, or indications of poor practice, are quickly identified and comprehensively investigated. Effective consultation with the local authority designated officer takes place, and clear records are kept of any decisions made and the associated actions to be taken.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The home is well managed by an experienced registered manager who displays an in-depth knowledge of each child's needs. She is supported by a strong and committed team of senior staff. The care staff feel very well supported. There are exceptional measures in place to ensure that the staff have opportunities to reflect on their practice and consider the emotional impact the work has on them personally. New staff are equally well supported to develop the knowledge and skills they need to care for the children effectively.

Although there are shortfalls in how the maintenance of the home has been monitored, other aspects of the quality of care monitoring are strong. All serious incidents have management oversight and the arrangements for monitoring children's progress are highly effective. Integrated assessment reports of children's progress are completed at regular intervals. These provide a thorough analysis of the child's development across all aspects of their lives. The assessments clearly identify where children require additional support and specify how the child can be supported to reach their targets.

Managers and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the placing authorities' longer-term plans for children. The staff can confidently speak about how their practice contributes towards the child achieving the desired outcomes stated in their placing authority care plan.

Detailed planning underpins how a child will be admitted to the home. There is a strong focus on what can be done to make the child feel welcome and enable them to settle quickly. Consideration is given to the specific characteristics of the child moving in. For example, the managers and staff reflected on, and planned for, how a child from a different ethnic background to those already living at the home might feel when first arriving at the home.

The staff have access to a comprehensive training programme and all work towards achieving a professional qualification in therapeutic childcare. Some members of staff have not completed all the required training on time and there has been a delay in providing face-to-face safeguarding training while a new training provider is identified. The registered manager is aware of these issues and is working towards resolving them.

Children's case files are well maintained and contain detailed information regarding the child's circumstances, their needs and the arrangements for their day-to-day care. The standard of case recording is good. For example, records of the direct work carried out with the children provide an excellent insight into the quality of the

relationship between the child and the key worker. The work that is being carried out meets the child's well-being and emotional support needs.

## 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        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>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.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))</p>                                                                                                    | 23 January 2023 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>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")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate.<br/>(Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to ensuring that staff who are involved in a physical restraint of a child are spoken to about the measure within 48 hours.</p> | 23 January 2023 |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. This is with specific reference to ensuring that children have individual car travel risk assessments, as specified in the home's generic travel risk assessment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

## **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:** SC023636

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Responsible individual:** Gary Yexley

**Registered manager:** Olivia Parvin

## **Inspector**

Stephen Collett, Social Care 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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022