

# SC031504

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It is registered to provide a short-break service and longer-term care for up to six children who may have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home full time, with another staying for five nights a week. Two children were receiving a short-break service.

**Inspection date: 24 October 2024**

**Date of last inspection:** 15 April 2024

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

## Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Inspectors spent time with all four children who were at the home during this inspection.

Children are kept safe at the home. Leaders, managers and staff understand children's diverse needs and additional vulnerabilities well and ensure action is taken to safeguard them. Child protection concerns are managed effectively, and written records demonstrate the actions taken by staff to respond to concerns.

Staff sufficiency remains a challenge that leaders and managers are working hard to resolve. Although more consistent agency staff are now used, covering staff vacancies affects the time managers and staff can spend on administrative duties and development activities.

Staff morale has improved and staff said they feel well supported by leaders, managers and colleagues. Specialist agency nurses and support workers provide care for two children who have complex needs. These staff work alongside the home's staff and provide children with consistency of care. This improved consistency has resulted in children making good progress. Relationships with other children have improved, and self-injurious behaviours have decreased. Staff are proud of children's achievements and celebrate them. Staff advocate well for children to ensure that they have the equipment and resources needed to develop their independence.

Agency staff are now receiving regular supervision. Leaders and managers obtain a profile from the agency that details the training and skills of the workers. The profile also confirms that Disclosure and Barring Service checks have been completed. However, leaders and managers have not assured themselves that all the required safer recruitment checks are being carried out, including overseas checks when appropriate. Action was taken during the inspection to obtain confirmation from the agency that the required checks are in place.

Overall, the quality of children's plans has improved. Most documents now provide staff with good information about children's needs and how they are to be met. However, some plans and records continue to include vague and institutional language that reduces the clarity and effectiveness of the documents. In addition, when monitors are used to check on children, the rationale for their use is not clearly documented.

Restraint is not often used. When it is, it is typically of a low level and for the minimum time necessary. However, records of restraint are not always clear about what happened and why. Leaders and managers monitor these records but do not

critically analyse the information and ask questions to assure themselves about staff practice. Meaningful conversations with staff involved in a restraint do not consistently take place, which reduces the ability of staff to reflect and learn. In addition, the model of restraint used by the staff team is different to that used by agency staff. Leaders and managers have not assessed if these techniques are compatible.

The environment for children is adapted to meet their needs, is spacious and well equipped. However, it does not provide disabled children with a homely and welcoming place to live. Recommendations raised at the last inspection for the provider to improve the environment have not been met. In addition, at this inspection, not all bathrooms were clean. A requirement has now been raised.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 15/04/2024      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |
| 15/11/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 07/03/2023      | Full            | Good                            |
| 18/05/2021      | Full            | 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, 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       |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|
| <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand and apply the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff—</p> <p>treat each child with dignity and respect;</p> <p>provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background;</p> <p>provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</p> <p>meet the needs of each child; and</p> <p>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(iii)(vi)(vii)(c)(i)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, leaders and managers should ensure they review the quality of the environment and provide the children with a clean, homely and welcoming environment.</p> | 1 January 2025 |

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| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child;</p> <p>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;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.<br/>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))</p> | <p>1 January 2025</p>   |
| <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy (“the behaviour management policy”) which sets out—</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      | <p>31 December 2024</p> |

how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and

the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.

The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it.

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")—

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.

|                                                                                    |  |
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| (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)<br>(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) |  |
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## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC031504

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

**Registered provider:** Bristol City Council

**Registered provider address:** Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services, City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR

**Responsible individual:** Kate Markley

**Registered manager:** Valerie Mower

## Inspectors

Wendy Anderson, Social Care Inspector  
Paula Lahey, Social Care Inspector

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