

# SC032475

**Trafford Borough Council**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This is a local authority children's home. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for five children who may need support with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since December 2003.

**Inspection date:** 3 March 2021

## **This monitoring visit**

This monitoring visit took place due to an increase in recent notifications of self-harming behaviour. Ofsted has not visited the home since January 2020. The inspector visited the home and spoke to children and professionals as part of this visit. Four children currently live in the home.

All four children spoke to the inspector, and overall feedback was very positive. One child said, 'Staff have done everything for me, and I mean everything. I can't thank them enough. They are like a family. I miss my own family but couldn't ask for more here.'

Staffing difficulties due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) have led to increased use of relief staff. Efforts are made to ensure that staff are consistent. However, one child feels that this has had an impact on the quality of care provided. Staff recognise this and adjust plans to reduce this impact when they can.

Staff spoken to understand the steps they need to take in the event of a child self-harming or showing signs of needing additional support. However, risk management plans do not provide clear steps for staff to take if responding to a risk of ligatures. This guidance is particularly important due to the fact that relief staff are sometimes caring for the children.

Children currently living in the home do not go missing from home. However, previously, one child was reported missing regularly. Records do not evidence that staff have followed risk management plans by searching known areas. Ofsted has also not been informed when he was missing for a lengthy period. This reduces the oversight and scrutiny from the regulator.

The manager is experienced and child focused. He knows the children well and spends time with each child. The manager leads a culture that helps children regulate their emotions and understand their behaviour. One social worker said, 'Staff are very calm, supportive and patient. They provide the environment that [Name of child] needs. I don't think he could get any better care.'

When children have moved into the home, managers have completed an assessment of the risk. However, they have not reviewed the potential impact of the child moving in on the current group or vice versa. Staff training has also not been reviewed to ensure that staff have the skills to meet their needs. As a result, staff have had training in response to incidents, rather than in order to prevent them.

Restraint is only used as a last resort. On occasion, the manager has been involved in physical intervention. These records have not been reviewed independently. This reduces transparency and the manager's opportunity for reflection and learning. Staff would also benefit from refreshing training in restraint techniques.

Some areas of the home have been decorated, and further maintenance work is planned. Photographs on the walls capture memories of children's experiences. Although this is making the home feel more homely, locks on all the internal doors mean that children do not have free access to all areas of the home.

The statement of purpose has been updated and sent to Ofsted. Monthly independent visits take place and now provide more detail and recommendations. The manager feels that the reports help him to improve the home. This meets a previous requirement and recommendation. Case records will be reviewed at the next full inspection.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 21/01/2020      | Full            | Good                    |
| 21/11/2018      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 19/12/2017      | Full            | Good                    |
| 20/03/2017      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |

## 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 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 staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>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.</p> <p>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(b))</p> <p>This relates specifically to staff searching known areas when children are missing from home and recording all efforts made to locate them.</p> <p>This also relates to ensuring that staff receive and refresh training needed to meet the needs of the children placed.</p> <p>This also relates to risk management plans providing clear steps for staff to take.</p> | 30 April 2021 |
| <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | 30 April 2021 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe.</p> <p>(Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p> <p>This relates specifically to removing internal locks on doors of communal areas.</p> |               |
| <p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(c)(e))</p> <p>This relates specifically to when children are missing from home for lengthy periods and when allegations are made.</p>                                                                              | 30 April 2021 |
| <p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date; and</p> <p>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>This has been carried over for review at the next visit</p>                                                                                                                                                     | 30 April 2021 |

## **Recommendations**

- The registered person should ensure that evaluation of missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care. (see paragraph 15.2). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.31)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. This relates specifically to seeking independent review when the manager is involved. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and 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**

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

## **Children's home details**

**Unique reference number:** SC032475

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

**Registered provider:** Trafford Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Trafford Council, Town Hall, Talbot Road,  
Manchester, Trafford M32 0TH

**Responsible individual:** Sally Rimmer

**Registered manager:** Paul Maguire

## **Inspector**

Sylvia Eboigbe, Social Care Inspector

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