

SC032475

Registered provider: Trafford Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home offers care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The registered manager has been in post since March 2007.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

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

Date of last inspection: 21 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
19/12/2017	Full	Good
20/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/12/2016	Full	Outstanding

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 registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	31/03/2020
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	31/03/2020
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(f)(h))	31/10/2020

Recommendations

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline, and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. Children should be offered the opportunity to access an advocacy support to help them with this (regulation 7(2)(b)(iii)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraphs 9.59 and 9.60)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are cared for in a warm and nurturing environment. They receive a good quality of care from a skilled and stable staff team. As a result, young people make good progress while at the home.

Young people are at the centre of decision-making. Staff have a good understanding of the home's model of care. This approach is embedded in the day-to-day practice of the home. As a result, young people have positive experiences of care and their well-being is promoted.

Once young people have left the home staff continue to offer support and guidance. One family member told the inspector, 'We would have gone under if it wasn't for the staff here. They have helped my brother so much.' This willingness to offer continuing care when young people have moved to independence is a key strength of the home. It promotes the importance of lasting relationships for young people who have been in residential care.

Young people are actively encouraged to participate in education. There are good links with virtual school teams and education providers to make sure that young people are receiving the education that meets their needs. Young people are supported to attend education. However, there is no private space at the home for young people to study. This is a potential barrier to young people's progress.

Young people are supported to participate in activities. The inspector met a young person and staff returning from a morning run in preparation for a race they have entered together. Support of this nature means that young people are encouraged to be active while strengthening relationships with the adults who are caring for them.

Young people attend health services locally. Specialist physical and emotional health provision is also accessed when required. As a result, young people are supported to develop and maintain good physical and mental health.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Practice in relation to the identification, assessment and management of risk is inconsistent. There are some examples of good practice between the home, the complex safeguarding team and the police to reduce risks in relation to exploitation of young people. In contrast, one young person had no risk assessments completed. The registered manager informed the inspector that no risks had been identified. As a result, there were no formal plans in place to adequately monitor and review his safety.

The location risk assessment for the home states that individual risk assessments will be completed before any young person travels into the city centre by themselves. These

assessments are not taking place. This means that a clear rationale for decision-making that promotes young people's steps to independence is not in place.

Physical intervention is used infrequently. Although numbers of restraints remain low there has been an increase in the period since the last inspection. Some aspects of the recording of restraints is good. There is a clear analysis of events leading up to the restraint and details of efforts to de-escalate the crisis situation to avoid physical intervention.

The recording of the restraints themselves lacks sufficient description to enable an adequate evaluation of the intervention. A number of the management reviews post-incident have been completed by the responsible individual due to the involvement of the registered manager in the intervention. These reviews are not evaluative. No work has been undertaken to look at any emerging trends or patterns. Young people are not offered access to independent advocacy after an incident of restraint. As a result, opportunities to improve practice or identify possible safeguarding concerns have been missed.

Case recording is minimal. Recording does not demonstrate how actions taken by staff have helped to progress young people's care plans or how care practice enhances the quality of care that young people receive. It was a recommendation of the last inspection that young people's progress should be reviewed though more detailed key-work sessions. This recommendation is not met.

Case records lack key local authority documents needed to plan and deliver young people's care. Care plans, delegated authority records and voluntary agreements to accommodate young people were all missing from young people's records. The registered manager was unable to explain the legal status of one young person on his admission to the home. The required documents to confirm the home's authorisation to care for the young person were not on his case records. Lack of documentation has not been identified and escalated by the registered manager.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The leadership and management of the home lack rigour. The registered manager does not have adequate systems in place to monitor and assess the quality of care provided. As a result, the management team does not have information available to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the home or to drive continuous improvement.

Reports resulting from the independent person's visits to the home contain inaccurate information. These inaccuracies are repeated from month to month within the reports. These errors relate to core functions such as management oversight, case recording and staff training. As a result, those professionals who are external to the home are being provided with an inaccurate and overly optimistic picture of the systems in place to ensure that the home is functioning to a high standard.

There is a lack of challenge from the registered manager and the responsible individual

to the information provided in the independent person's reports. The registered manager told the inspector he did not know this was expected of him. There is little evidence of input from the responsible individual. As a result of the lack of robust internal or external challenge, the registered manager is not receiving adequate support to improve his leadership of the home.

The statement of purpose for the home has been reviewed and updated by the registered manager. However, the registered manager has not ensured that the statement of purpose has been provided to Ofsted.

The registered manager advocates on behalf of young people when considering new admissions to the home. This takes into consideration the needs of young people already in placement and those potential newcomers. There continue to be incidences of senior managers in the local authority overruling the views of the manager. As a result young people's positive experiences and progress in the home are put at risk.

The home benefits from a stable, experienced, and suitably qualified staff team. There have been no new members of staff recruited since the last inspection. The majority of staff have been in place for a number of years. This means that staff know each other well and work constructively together as a team. Staff receive regular supervision and annual appraisals of their performance. This supports them to reflect on their role and the contribution they are making to the care of young people.

There is no comprehensive system in place to monitor staff training. As a result the registered manager does not have sufficient information to address staff development on a team or individual level. For example, oversight of the required annual training of staff in respect of physical intervention is ad hoc. This means that staff are not undertaking training within required timescales. Two young people in the home are unaccompanied asylum seekers. Staff have not received training to understand and meet the care needs of unaccompanied asylum-seeking young people.

The physical environment of the home is reasonable. The communal areas for young people to use are comfortable and welcoming. Young people's bedrooms and the landings and corridors of the home would benefit from further personalisation. Staff are current undertaking redecoration of the home which will improve the environment further for young people.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 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

Dawn Parton, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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