

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 is registered to care for up to five children who may have social and/or emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

A new manager has been appointed and they registered with Ofsted in May 2023.

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 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: 6 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2022	Full	Good
12/10/2021	Full	Good
21/01/2020	Full	Good
21/11/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Three children currently live in the home. Children receive good-quality care and are making progress. Children have positive relationships with the staff and feel listened to and respected.

Children who have moved out routinely visit the home to see staff. This reflects the quality of their relationships with staff. The staff are supportive and helpful towards those children. The continuation of support after children have moved out has helped them to settle into their new homes.

When children are new to the home, they get a warm welcome from staff and other children. Good planning before children move in ensures that staff know how best to look after them. When children have moved in at short notice, staff have been able to adapt, learn quickly and work hard to reassure children about any worries they may have.

Staff support children to have time with their families. Staff are proactive in overcoming barriers to children seeing their families. When needed, staff support children to re-establish and develop relationships with important loved ones.

Children are in good health. For example, one child has been supported to reduce their use of vapes. Children are encouraged to be active and to eat healthy meals. One child told the inspector that they would never miss a chance to have a roast dinner cooked by a particular member of staff.

Children have individualised plans to support them in accessing school or other educational provisions. Despite this, one child has experienced difficulties accessing their allocated education. Staff have missed opportunities to challenge the school when the child has not received sufficient support. This is because staff do not have a full understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the school or the virtual school team.

Maintenance of the home is not always completed in a timely way. The windows of the home are in poor condition, and some radiators are damaged and need replacing. These areas for improvement detract from other aspects of the home that are homely and welcoming.

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

Risks are identified, understood and managed well by staff. Staff take effective action to safeguard the children living in the home. The positive relationships staff have with children mean that children engage in discussions about staying safe.

When children move into the home, the manager considers the possible risks of children living together. The manager and senior leaders have taken action to restrict additional children from moving into the home when this would increase risks. This means the identified risks for children living in the home have been managed effectively.

One child spoke about their positive sleeping routine due to the home's weekly rewards plan. These plans are individualised to help children progress with personalised goals. This promotes positive behaviour.

Staff understand what action to take when allegations are made. Children are well supported and feel listened to. The manager has ensured that learning and further support have been offered to children and the persons who have been the subjects of the allegations.

Staff in the home have built proactive and effective working relationships with other agencies. This means children are supported when they are at risk of criminal exploitation. The manager has escalated concerns to ensure that effective multi-agency working is in place to reduce the risks to children.

Children are supported to take appropriate risks for their age. Staff have ensured that one child received additional specialist support. This has helped them increase their knowledge and understanding of safer relationships.

The most recent fire-risk assessment action plan had not been updated. Action was taken during inspection to ensure that this reflected the most recent updates. In addition, fire-safety training has been scheduled to give staff an opportunity to update their knowledge.

Staff understand the risks for children who go missing from home. There are plans in place to manage such situations. However, some plans do not always reflect children's needs. This has not impacted on staff actions to ensure that children are kept safe.

The manager has identified the need for additional training in relation to gang affiliation and harmful sexualised behaviours. This training has not yet been scheduled.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2023. He is well respected by children and staff. The manager has effective oversight of the progress of the children, the staff and the home. This supports the manager to make continual improvements to the care provided for children.

The home has a stable staff team, two new staff members were in post at the time of the inspection. The existing staff are experienced and provide children with

consistent levels of care. The staff are enthusiastic and compassionate and empower children to understand their rights.

Staff say that they feel supported and listened to. The manager ensures that staff receive monthly supervision. This has helped the manager to identify the support needs of staff. The manager has taken action to support staff to make progress and develop their skills. One staff member said that they feel confident because of the guidance they get from the manager.

Staff are empowered to challenge partner agencies to ensure that children's needs are met. The registered manager is a strong advocate for children. He has successfully challenged wider agencies to ensure that children's views are at the centre of care planning arrangements.

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
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. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	13 December 2023
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1) (2)(vii)(c)(i)) The relates to ensuring that timely repairs are made to the home, including to damaged windows and radiators.	13 December 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise any signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm. This specially relates to training about gang affiliation and harmful sexualised behaviours. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff understand the roles and responsibilities of the virtual school and be able to effectively advocate for children to access suitable education. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' pages 27, paragraphs 5.10)

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: SC032475

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0TH

Responsible individual: Sally Rimmer

Registered manager: Adam Fletcher

Inspector

Alexandra Pearson, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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