

SC032496

Registered provider: Trafford Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority and provides care and accommodation for up to six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home's statement of purpose describes the home's approach as being an adapted 'No wrong door' model.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2017.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 June 2022

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 20 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/09/2019	Full	Good
05/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children have experienced significant changes to the group living in the home. Children's needs, risks and known vulnerabilities are assessed as part of them moving into the home. However, known risks are not always well considered and in one instance serious concerns about matching a child with other children living in the home were disregarded. Some children have experienced placement breakdowns due to unsuitable matching.

The inspector observed warm and nurturing interactions between staff and children during the inspection. Staff spoken to were committed and caring. However, due to the current insufficient staffing levels, the team is not able to meet all children's assessed needs. Children are cared for by a range of core staff, relief staff and staff from the local authority's other home. This means children do not benefit from regular direct work to support them, due to a lack of a consistent core staff team.

Children are not all benefiting from well-planned day-to-day care. There is no consistency in the daily routines for some children. Staff said they have concerns about children regularly staying up late at night. This is resulting in most children struggling to attend school or engaging in their individual learning. However, one child is attending school and is progressing well in their learning.

The home is welcoming, with children's photos and paintings on the walls. The home environment has been improved, including with a newly fitted kitchen, although children can only currently access this up until 10pm. This change, implemented in response to children staying up late, means that children cannot access all areas of their home. Children's bedrooms are personalised, with one child proudly showing the inspector their medals awarded in recognition of their sporting achievements.

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

Children living in the home have not been consistently and effectively safeguarded. This includes several safeguarding concerns relating to when some children go missing. The response to children's medical needs is not effective when children have disclosed to staff that they have taken illegal substances.

Two children had taken prescribed medication, obtained from an unknown adult male, while missing from the home together. Staff did not seek immediate medical assistance in response to this. One child later disclosed having taken further tablets, while in the home, within a week of the original incident. Staff did not seek immediate medical assistance and the child later went missing. There had been no review of the previous two incidents. This resulted in missed opportunities to

safeguard children. Ofsted were also only notified of two of the three serious incidents.

Children who go missing from care are not safeguarded effectively. Staff do not consistently follow the strategies provided in the risk management plans for each child. This is significant, as three of the four children living in the home have been missing, either on their own or together. Concerns around child sexual exploitation were identified at the point of matching for some children. Children's individual risks have increased due to the matching of children with higher levels of risk. The practice of children being collected by taxi when missing late at night means staff are unable to appropriately assess any associated risks. They have missed the opportunity to gather further information on how to prevent future episodes of children going missing.

Professionals supporting children commented on the positive and collaborative working between the home and statutory agencies. This includes attendance by the registered manager at regular professional meetings to monitor risks to children.

Staff do not monitor children's mobile phone use. Children are known to spend time on their mobile phones during the night. This impacts on their well-being and is a safeguarding concern due to the identified risks associated with going missing from the home. One child also arranged for a peer to come to the home without staff knowledge. Staff did respond appropriately to this other child gaining access to the home. However, this raises concerns about staff's oversight of the children's use of mobile phones.

Risk management plans for each child are not regularly reviewed, including reviews of staff practice and children's behaviour following significant incidents. This means staff are not provided with strategies to mitigate risk and help prevent further incidents. For example, children's risk management plans refer to each child being supported by an allocated member of staff. This is not current practice in the home.

Appropriate and immediate action was taken in response to a previous disclosure of bullying by one child towards another. There was an appropriate response to a complaint made by another child. This included a restorative justice meeting with a staff member due to the behaviour directed towards them by the child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager was on annual leave at the time of this inspection. There were no suitable arrangements in place to cover the manager's absence. There is no deputy manager attached to the home. A senior manager ensured they were available throughout the inspection alongside the senior staff members working in the home.

The provider is planning changes, to operate using the 'No wrong door' model. However, the home's statement of purpose currently describes a model of care that is an adapted version of the 'No wrong door' model. New posts are being advertised

by the provider with new posts with a combined role of supporting children in the home and in community outreach work. However, to date there has been no recruitment of staff to the vacant posts. Consequently, the core staff team is understaffed and is not able to meet the individual needs of all children and the statement of purpose.

The team is currently being supported by staff from the local authority's other home, together with agency workers. The inconsistency of the staff team is having a negative impact on children's relationships with staff. In addition, the potential impact of any conflict of interest and/or risks arising from relatives working together has not been appropriately assessed. There was no evidence of the monitoring of the potential impact of this on practice.

Staff do not consistently receive all appropriate training to enable them to undertake their caring role. This includes training in how to respond to risks associated with children going missing from care. One staff member has not received training in the home's agreed approach to the use of physical intervention, despite having worked in the home for a significant period.

Supervision is not consistently provided to all staff. Staff providing relief cover to the home do not receive supervision. This means not all staff have regular time and space to reflect on their own practice and discuss any concerns they may have. Some staff referred to inconsistency in the team's approach to responding to children.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))	17 July 2022
*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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	17 July 2022

harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	
*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— 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; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;	17 July 2022

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f))	
*The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; that each child's relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c))	17 July 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	17 July 2022

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC032496

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Trafford Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Sally Rimmer

Registered manager: Alicia Cooper

Inspector

Maria Lonergan, Social Care Inspector

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