

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 for up to six children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2017.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 September 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be 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 is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 8 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: Three compliance notices were served on 15 June 2022 in relation to regulation 12 (the protection of children standard), regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) and regulation 14 (the care planning standard). All compliance notices were met when reviewed at a monitoring visit on 19 July 2022.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
20/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/07/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children are building positive relationships with staff. Children who have lived at the home before stay in touch with the staff. This means that the children value the relationships they have made.

The home environment is improving. Staff have considered children's views when decorating and adding soft furnishings. Children's bedrooms are also clean and personalised. However, locks on internal doors prevent children from accessing all areas of their home and make the home feel institutional.

Welcome packs help children to feel more comfortable when they arrive. Children receive information about the home in a child-friendly guide. However, the guide has not been updated in line with changes to the current model of care being used. This may lead to children feeling confused about who will be caring for them.

Staff have supported children to prepare for their return to school after the summer holidays. The manager has escalated concerns and advocated for children. However, there is still not an agreed plan for one child, and education plans lack structure. This means that the child is missing out on learning, which will impact on her future.

One child has not yet been supported to understand past trauma and the impact this has had on her relationships. This means that the child is left unsure of their future plans and why decisions have been made.

Children benefit from being able to spend time with family. However, staff have not always taken opportunities to promote and support children in developing and maintaining important relationships. This could have an impact on future plans for children.

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

Children have frequently been reported missing from care. Safety plans now provide clearer guidance for staff and children. However, staff are not consistent in taking appropriate steps to find children before reporting them missing to the police. This is frustrating for children and drains public resources.

Staff are curious about children's friendships and children have been supported to learn about healthy relationships. Safety plans and agreements have been completed with children so that they are aware of the expectations and steps staff will take to ensure that children are safe.

Children have built relationships with specialists from external services. Staff understand that children will only engage in meaningful learning with people who they trust. As a result, children are beginning to understand how to keep themselves safe.

Staff support children with any substance misuse concerns. Risk management plans now guide staff to seek medical advice on each occasion. Staff have also made relevant referrals to support services when necessary.

Multi-agency meetings take place regularly. Relevant information is shared with people working with each child. Plans on how to keep children safe are discussed as a group. As a result, complex safeguarding risks have reduced.

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

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. The manager has good oversight of the events that happen in the children's lives and understands the importance of multi-agency support. As a result, children have access to support services which are relevant to their needs.

The manager reviews any incidents when children are reported missing from care. However, she has not identified or addressed weaknesses in staff practice. As a result, staff have not consistently followed the protocols in place.

The manager does not always use systems in place to monitor the service effectively. For example, action plans are not always included or reviewed after meetings and health and safety checks. This makes it difficult for the manager to monitor the progress made and how staff are meeting the needs of the children.

The manager is a good advocate for the children, which has resulted in positive outcomes. For example, one child, who no longer lives at the home, has been able to stay in the local area to maintain relationships with their family. This means that children feel listened to and valued.

Staff receive regular supervision and say that they feel supported. The staff are appropriately trained to meet the specific needs of the children. Staff also have access to additional development opportunities to further enhance their skills and knowledge.

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 ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) This relates specifically to removing internal locks on the doors of communal areas.	28 October 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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; 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)(v)(b))	28 October 2022

This specifically relates to staff following the steps identified in the missing-from-care protocol before reporting children as missing to the police, unless an immediate risk is known or suspected.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1) (a)(b)(2)(h)) This relates to ensuring that action plans are regularly reviewed and updated after meetings, auditing and health and safety checks.	28 October 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that evaluation of incidents, including missing-from-home incidents, is undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.31)
- The registered person should ensure that children who are not attending full-time education are engaged in suitable structured activities which are relevant to their individual needs and interests. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should help children to develop and maintain a positive relationship with their family. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 38, paragraph 8.6)
- The registered person should ensure that staff play a full role in life-story work. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide is reflective of the current model of care and provides clear and current information to children about who will care for them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.23)

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

Responsible individual: Sally Rimmer

Registered manager: Alicia Cooper

Inspectors

Sylvia Eboigbe, Social Care Inspector
Kerri Lynch-Mahoney, Social Care Inspector

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