

SC032496

Registered provider: Trafford Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to 6 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. There were 2 children living at the home at the time of this inspection.

Both children spoke with the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2017.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 May 2026

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: 24 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/04/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/04/2024	Full	Good
20/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
12/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Summary of findings

Since the last inspection, the home has experienced a high level of change, with children moving into and out of the home and a temporary closure following a fire. Despite this, children are generally well supported, cared for and consulted with. Their health, emotional wellbeing and independence are promoted through appropriate services, training and positive relationships with staff. The manager is experienced, reflective and works effectively with other professionals to safeguard children effectively.

Children benefit from a wide range of activities, personalised care and advocacy in relation to education and future opportunities. However, there are areas requiring improvement.

Overall, strong leadership and commitment from staff support positive outcomes for children, although greater consistency and robustness in practice are needed to further reduce risk.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last assurance inspection, five children have moved into the home and five have moved out. Some children have lived at the home for short periods and others for several years. Regardless, all children are well supported and cared for. Children's moves both into and out of the home are managed sensitively, with careful planning to ensure that each child's individual needs are met.

The home is a large purpose-built detached property. It has large gardens that include an orchard and a woodland area to encourage wildlife. There is a trampoline and seating areas. Inside, there are some aspects that make it feel institutional, including notice boards and an education room. Additionally, there were locks on doors of communal areas. However, this was addressed swiftly during the inspection. Children's bedrooms are personalised and tidy. However, one child does not have adequate storage for their clothes.

Children's health has improved since they moved into the home because of staff, who ensure that children receive outstanding immunisations and attend routine health appointments. Staff support children to access services, such as child and adolescent mental health services, substance misuse support and regular visits from the looked-after children's nurse. The manager ensures that staff receive the training needed to support children's health needs. More recently, the manager arranged sleep hygiene training to help staff to support children in developing healthy habits and routines. Staff support children in developing healthy routines and habits.

The manager is a strong advocate for the children and understands and promotes the importance of education. There have been some real successes for children, including

achieving qualifications and securing apprenticeships and employment. However, when children struggle with attendance, staff do not always maintain clear structure and routine effectively.

Staff provide a range of activities and experiences tailored to children's individual preferences. Children have enjoyed trips to London, weekends away and attending the gym and dance classes. Staff regularly consult children and place them at the centre of their care. Children's cultural needs are identified and met. This ensures that children feel respected and valued as individuals.

Staff support children to develop their independence skills and consistently engage them in meaningful conversations about risks, health and wellbeing.

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

Although there have been some significant incidents since the last assurance visit, the manager and staff have worked closely with relevant others to safeguard children and promote their safety.

Children had to move out of the home for a period of time in the spring following a fire. Staff acted swiftly and appropriately to evacuate the children and contact the emergency services. The manager worked effectively with relevant professionals to ensure that there were suitable temporary living arrangements and appropriate supervision plans for all children. Although the cause of the fire was not established and the police subsequently closed the case, the manager used this incident as a learning opportunity. They ensured that all children completed a detailed fire safety qualification and completed a robust review of the incident to identify and embed learning.

There has been one allegation against a staff member, and this was appropriately managed and shared with the relevant professionals. Additionally, the child was kept up to date with the progress of the investigation to ensure that their views were considered and any decisions made were part of a multi-agency response.

There are gaps in the safer recruitment processes that mean the manager cannot assure themselves of the suitability of all the staff who work at the home.

When children leave the home and do not return, as expected, staff have clear procedures to follow, and records show that the staff are generally proactive in their responses. However, there have been three incidents when the staff did not follow children immediately after they left the home during the night. This practice increases the potential risk to children's safety and welfare.

There have been some incidents of bullying between children. However, bullying is not tolerated within the home, and incidents are addressed promptly by staff. As a result, children report that they feel safe and that staff support them effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and has worked at the home for many years. A new responsible individual, who brings a wealth of experience and a new outlook, has been appointed. The manager feels supported by their presence.

The manager is reflective and receptive to advice and suggestions from others. This supports the ongoing development of the children, staff and home environment. The manager also ensures that thorough assessments are completed to determine whether the home can meet children's needs prior to them moving in. However, records do not consistently provide evidence for when children have moved into the home.

The manager uses robust monitoring systems that support effective oversight of children's experiences and outcomes. They spend time with children to understand their views, wishes and feelings. As a result of these discussions, children have been able to have pets, which demonstrates that they feel listened to and valued.

Staff report that they feel supported and receive regular supervision which is reflective and helps them to carry out their roles effectively. Staff also demonstrate a good understanding of the home's safeguarding procedures.

The manager has relied on a high use of agency staff since the last visit. However, they strive to maintain consistency by using regular agency staff wherever possible, and they ensure that those staff members receive appropriate supervision. Staff training is suitable, and detailed induction plans are in place to support new staff when they start to work at the home.

Team meetings are held regularly and are child focused. The manager is keen to learn from incidents and practice and encourages the same level of reflection from the staff.

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 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 harm to the child and; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)) This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that staff take the appropriate action and adhere to children's care plans when children leave the home late at night.	3 July 2026
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— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff—	3 July 2026

provide to children personal items that are appropriate for their age and understanding; and ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child; and (ii) enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(viii)(c)) This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that children have adequate storage space within their bedrooms, and to maintaining an environment that feels homely rather than institutional.	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) This relates specifically to the registered person verifying so far as reasonably practicable the reason why the employment or position ended when a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults.	3 July 2026
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must— maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4.	3 July 2026

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that when children do not attend a school that the staff support children to maintain routine and structure. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

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: Town Hall, Talbot Road, Stretford, Manchester M32 0TH

Responsible individual: Laura Caunce

Registered manager: Alicia Cooper

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

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