

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032496
Inspector	Pamela Nuckley
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Trafford Borough Council
Registered person address	Trafford Metropolitan Borough Quay West, Trafford Wharf Manchester M17 1HH
Responsible individual	Gerard Crowther
Registered manager	Dianne Pauline Jeffs / POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	09/10/2014

Inspection date	27/01/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the homes last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

At the last full inspection in October 2014, the overall effectiveness of the service was judged as adequate. Four requirements and five recommendations were set. Most of the requirements and recommendations have been fully met and some have been partially met.

The Registered Manager left in September 2014. Ofsted were informed promptly along with the interim arrangements for managing the home. An acting manager has been in place for thirteen weeks. The home has recruited a suitably qualified and experienced manager and Ofsted is currently processing her application for the Registered Manager's position. The acting manager is actively involved in the day-to-day operation of the home and has clear expectations that the staff team will achieve the best possible outcomes for all young people in their care.

Staff know and understand the stated aims and objectives of the service and are committed to meeting them. The commitment from staff is a strength of the home. For example, most staff absences are covered within the existing team, or by cover staff who are already known by the young people to ensure their continuity of care. All staff spoken to say: they enjoyed coming to work; that they had a strong team who are committed to ensuring the safety of and good outcomes for young people; and that they thought the training offered and support given was very good.

This home takes planned and emergency admissions. As a result, young people are at different stages of engaging with the staff and investing in the placement. One young person said 'I hate it here but that's because I want to go home. Staff are really good and they talk to me all the time, especially about keeping myself safe and I am trying because I want to go home.' The acting manager formally consults with young people at the start of their placement and then after 3 months. She has

used their answers to show how their attitude, positive comments and development ideas grow over time. This is a working tool which informs the homes development plan and helps the home improve on a daily basis.

Some young people continue to be late in or do not tell staff where they are going. The home follows the local authority's policy and procedures regarding young people who leave the home without staff permission. There are good protocols and reporting systems established with the local constabulary and the local safeguarding board. Young people confirmed that they are actively discouraged from having unauthorised absences and are increasingly aware of the risks that their choices present to their safety. Good individualised risk assessments identify the vulnerability of young people. They are reviewed frequently and guide staff on how to respond to and manage risks. The home also has good links with the community police officer who visits regularly. This helps to build a rapport and trust with young people. Consequently due to these positive measures, coupled with the range of enjoyable activities on offer and the individual discussions with young people, there has been a significant reduction in young people being reported missing from the home overnight.

A senior member of staff has completed an additional training course on child sexual exploitation (CSE) called 'real love rocks'. The home purchased all the materials of the course and have started using it with young people. This consists of identifying unsafe behaviours by watching videos, playing board games and completing modules. One young person said 'I feel really safe here and the information has opened my eyes to how you can be manipulated into doing something you don't want to do.' This shows that young people are benefitting from this piece of work.

Young people leave this home in a planned manner. The acting manager ensures that all support systems are in place before young people leave. As a result, young people have successfully moved back to their family, into foster care or onto semi-independence. The staff continue their support after young people leave and until young people have settled. Parents say this home is very good in communicating with them and working towards identified plans. In addition to this, young people, parents and professionals receive a monthly newsletter about the home and forthcoming activities or celebrations. This means that all parties are fully informed about the home.

At the last inspection the home was asked to ensure that fire procedures were robust. A fire officer attended the home and completed a safety audit. Risks assessments were updated and a log of fire drills was put in place. Young people confirmed that a fire evacuation was completed with them on arrival to the home. Fire drills continue to take place monthly so all young people and staff know what to do in the event of a fire to keep safe.

The home was asked to ensure that the Registered Manager regularly monitors the quality of care in the home. The acting manager monitors all records of the home.

This ensures compliance with the home's policies and they identify any concerns, patterns or trends. Therefore, immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring. These reports are sent timely to Ofsted that allows Ofsted to have a good oversight of the home between inspections.

The home was asked to ensure that the home is well maintained and decorated. Action has been taken on a number of areas, for example, grouted areas in the bathroom, which had mould on them, have been redone and broken bath panels have been replaced. The acting manager has submitted a quote for redecoration of the home. She is currently consulting with young people around their wishes. As a result, some young people spoke enthusiastically about ideas for their bedrooms such as having murals, posters or wallpaper. This helps ensure that young people take pride in their home and that the home is decorated to a good standard.

The home was asked to ensure that a written record was kept of all consequences imposed upon young people. There is a designated book that outlines the misdemeanour, consequence given and young people comment and sign. Young people say that they are able to negotiate the length of time of a consequence or how much they have to pay back for damages. Therefore, young people say the system is fair. But records show that some consequences have been given because young people have not complied with requests to go to school. In addition to this, they have also lost incentive money for not attending school. Although young people did not raise this as an issue, it appears young people are being sanctioned twice. Further to this, some records of consequences given are not clear. For example, several say 'withheld for 24hrs' but do not say what was withheld. This does not show that consequences are fair and clearly understood.

The home was asked to ensure that the Statement of Purpose (SOP) and young people's guide is kept under review and that HMCI is notified of any revisions within 28 days. These have been completed and Ofsted has received them. The SOP shows who is the Responsible Individual for the home and the interim arrangements for managing the home. The children's guide has been updated to show the children's commissioner for England and includes a fire procedure guide. This ensures that all professionals, parents and young people know what services are provided by the home.

The home was asked to ensure that emergency placements were not detrimental to other young people. Some steps have been taken to improve decision making so compatibility issues with other young people already placed can be more fully considered. The SOP now clearly states 'emergency placements will be taken in conjunction with the manager'. However, the acting manager confirms that this does not always happen, especially at the weekend. Consequently, the home is not working in line with its SOP as the acting manager has not been able to make an informed decision about placements. Therefore, this requirement has been only partially met and has been raised again.

In addition to this, the homes SOP talks about the start of a placement rather than the admission process for planned or emergency placements. For example, it does not say what the admission procedure is, what paperwork would be required or whether an impact risk assessment would be completed. This does not ensure that the admissions procedure is robust or that professionals, parents, staff and young people are aware of and understand the process.

The home was asked to provide sufficient detail of 'inappropriate' behaviours, within the behaviour management plan and the actions to take to support young people. This has been partially met. The acting manager has devised a new format for recording behaviours of concern which clearly identify the actions for staff to take. They are in place for the majority of the young people but not all. Therefore, this recommendation has been repeated.

The home was asked to ensure that health care plans have sufficient detail with regards to issues such as sexual health, identity and self-harm. This has been partially met. The acting manager has devised a new format that captures a good view of young people's health in all areas. But these have not been reviewed since being put in place. As a result, emerging health concerns have not been incorporated into the plans. This does not ensure that all young people's health is robustly monitored. Therefore, this has been raised to a requirement.

The home was asked to ensure there are systems in place to monitor the adequacy and quality of record keeping and take action when needed. This was also to include encouraging young people to sign and make comments on the records. This has been partially met. The acting manager has devised new formats for a range of records. This includes risk assessments, behaviour management plans and health plans. The quality of them has significantly improved. Attempts have been made to capture young people's views and young people are at different stages in engaging with this. Most young people complete consultation documents on their care and sign records such as the consequence book. But some documentation has not been signed or dated by the author or relevant parties. This does not show that all parties are in agreement with the information supplied.

An independent visitor monitors the quality of care at the home. These reports have failed to identify the shortfalls raised within this report. There is no evaluation or reflect on the quality of the documents or whether they have been signed and dated. This does not ensure that the home is robustly monitored.

Young people are continuing to progress and have achieved good outcomes. Most young people say this is a good home that keeps them safe. They say that they are listened to and are treated with respect. Therefore, they have not raised any concerns. They say that they have an independent visitor who visits the home regularly, so they can raise any issues with them, if they wished. There has been no restraints since the last inspection and young people's behaviour has improved due to the good incentive schemes in place.

There has been no safeguarding concerns to report but staff are well trained and knowledge about reporting incidents as they arise. The shortfalls raised within this report are of a recording nature and they have had no impact on the care young people receive but they have the potential to do so if not fully rectified.

Information about this children's home

This Local Authority children's home provides care and accommodation for up to six young people of either gender from 11 to 17 years of age. The home is registered with Ofsted to provide services to young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/10/2014	Full	adequate
03/02/2014	Interim	good progress
05/06/2013	Full	good
04/02/2013	Interim	good progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
4 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. This is specifically in relation to consulting with the manager on emergency admissions (Regulation 4 (6))	27/02/2015
4 (2001)	ensure that the homes statement of purpose consists of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1. This is specifically in relation to including any criteria used for admission to the home (Regulation 4 (1) Schedule 1 (11))	27/02/2015
20 (2001)	promote and protect the physical, emotional and mental health of the children accommodated in the children's home. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that emerging health needs are	27/02/2015

	incorporated into young people's health plans. (Regulation 20 (1))	
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the home meets young people's emotional and behavioural needs as set out in the care plan. In particular that behaviour management plans are sufficiently detailed with regards to 'inappropriate' behaviours and the actions to take to support young people (NMS 3.7)
- ensure that consequences for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair (NMS 3.8)
- ensure that records are clear and up to date. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that all records are signed and dated by the author (NMS 22)
- ensure that visits to the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks set out in Regulations and guidance. This is specifically in relation to checking the quality of documents, evaluating and reflecting on them and ensuring they are signed and dated. (NMS 21.7)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.