

SC034313

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated and managed by a local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to six children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2020.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 July 2025

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	requires improvement to be 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: 8 April 2024

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
08/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/06/2023	Full	Good
22/03/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/09/2021	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Over time, children develop trusting relationships with staff who care for them. Staff understand children's care history and make efforts to get to know children's social interests. Children can identify staff that they trust and feel able to speak to.

Children are supported to be healthy. When children struggle to attend important health appointments, staff are proactive in rearranging appointments or arranging services to come to the child at the home. Staff promote the benefit of specialist services, for example mental health services. One child's engagement is helping them to develop skills to manage their emotions in a safer way.

Staff understand the importance of family ties. Whenever it is safe, staff support children to spend time with people who are important to them. This helps children to maintain relationships that form their support network now and in the future. Parents say that they feel welcomed into the home and continue to feel part of their children's lives.

Children are encouraged to share their views about their home, such as food choices and activities. Some children are confident to bake and cook without staff support, which increases their confidence and life skills.

Some children move out of the home in a planned way. Children visit their new home before they move. Staff listen to children's views about when they feel the time is right to move out. One child praised the staff for the practical and emotional support that they received to help them move. The child described the process as 'class.' Additionally, staff continue to offer support to children when they move out.

The home is large with ample space for children and staff to spend time together. Children's personalised bedrooms reflect their personality and interests. However, restrictive measures mean that children cannot always access all areas of their home, for example a staff-only bathroom. Some external doors are routinely locked on an evening, preventing children from making an informed choice to leave. Additionally, laundry items are locked away. This does not help children to carry out tasks independently.

Children's experiences in education are mixed. Some children re-engage in education following a period of non-attendance and have completed exams. Children are helped to think about future options ahead of leaving school and secure places at further education provisions. This helps to raise children's aspirations and improve future life choices. However, one child has not attended education for several months. Their daily routine is disorganised and does not support them to be ready to learn. Staff do not consistently provide informal education activities or structure to the child's day. This does not help the child make progress in learning and social development.

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

Children's individual risk assessments do not include actions staff should take to help children to stay safe and prevent further risks. Staff are not always sufficiently curious when there are signs that children are being exploited. Additionally, staff recordings of incidents do not include enough detail about what staff did to protect the child. This prevents important information being shared that could help protect children.

The manager has not challenged decisions made around safety and care planning for one child. The manager has not escalated her concerns around the decision-making to consider other strategies that could keep the child safe.

Staff do not routinely have discussions with children about their individual risks and how to keep themselves safe. This includes risks related to substance misuse, online safety, and exploitation. Consequently, children are not sufficiently supported to develop the knowledge and strategies needed to protect themselves or recognise harmful situations.

Staff respond to incidents of self-injurious behaviours with sensitivity and care. Children trust staff and often tell them when they have harmed. Staff respond by providing reassurances and any medical attention to the child. Staff are vigilant of the environment and remove objects that could potentially be harmful. When concerns increase, the manager changes staffing arrangements to increase supervision. The manager reviews these arrangements appropriately and reduces safety measures when it is safe to do so.

Incidents are well managed by staff, who respond calmly and try to de-escalate unwanted behaviours. This approach means children have not been physically held. Staff talk to children about the incident when the time is right to help them reflect. In cases of serious incidents, the manager informs safeguarding professionals and the regulator. This allows for external scrutiny and oversight of safeguarding incidents.

Children who are missing from home receive a coordinated multi-agency response to ensure their safe return. When children return, staff adopt a therapeutic approach to help children feel welcomed back. This helps children to feel confident to share their experiences about the time they were away from the home.

The manager follows processes to ensure that the adults caring for children are safe. Allegations of harm against members of staff are responded to appropriately. The manager communicates with safeguarding professionals and takes prompt action to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a longstanding, experienced manager. She is supported by senior care officers who strengthen the management team. The manager understands

the strengths and areas of development for the home. She has embraced additional management training to develop her skills and improve practice.

Some staff have worked together for several years and bring consistency to the staff team. Staff who have been absent from the home have now returned to add further stability to the team. The manager has ensured that staff complete training around working together as a team. Staff feel this has helped to bring some cohesion to their practice.

The manager and staff benefit from the input of the clinical support team. Formulation meetings that keep the children's needs under review are well attended by staff. The process helps staff to develop strategies to respond to children's needs and presenting behaviours.

The manager is held in high regard. She has developed good-quality relationships with professionals, who provide positive feedback about communication and the children's care. The manager works closely with professionals in the children's network.

The manager uses team meetings and group discussions as an opportunity to come together to talk about practice in the home. The manager identifies key topics and policies to discuss and refresh staff knowledge. This results in the ongoing development of the team.

The manager's monitoring and oversight of the home is generally effective. Oversight of home conditions means request for repairs and maintenance are timely. This ensures that the home is a welcoming environment for children. However, audits of children's records have not identified when statutory documents have not been received. This is a missed opportunity to be reassured that staff are following children's most up-to-date care plan.

Some children have moved into the home with little notice and introductions. The process has impacted on the quality of the manager's assessment about whether children are compatible to live together. Additionally, the manager's assessment does not always consider all known risks of new children moving in against the risks of children already living in the home. As a result, strategies to mitigate or manage the risk are not always identified in children's plans.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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; 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; 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)(ii)(iii)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's plans include actions staff should take to prevent and reduce risks to children.	31 August 2025
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;	31 August 2025

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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v))	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c))	31 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's relevant plans are obtained to form the basis of their care. This specifically relates to ensuring that systems are in place so that delegated authority, education plans, care plans and statutory review documents are received. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 10, paragraph 2.1)
- The registered person should ensure that children only move into the home if they are satisfied that they can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs, and fully considered how a new child moving in will affect the existing group of children. This specifically relates to ensuring that steps are taken to mitigate or reduce risks for children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 56, paragraph 11.4)

- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children can access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are undertaking and recording direct work with the children to help them to develop and make progress. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.14)

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: SC034313

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Hull City Council

Registered provider address: Kingston upon Hull City Council, The Guildhall, Alfred Gelder Street, Hull HU1 2AA

Responsible individual: Michael Boddy

Registered manager: Victoria Brown

Inspector

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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