

SC034851

Registered provider: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and is registered to provide care for up to five children. The home's statement of purpose states that care is provided for children between the ages of 11 and 17 years with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2021.

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 May 2024

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: 5 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2023	Full	Good
07/06/2022	Full	Inadequate
21/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/07/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, three children were living at the home. One young person has left the home since the last inspection to live with family.

Children make good progress across all aspects of their development. Careful consideration of their needs and planned transitions provide the groundwork for children to settle into the home and quickly benefit from the support and opportunities on offer. The actions of staff are seen to have an impact. One social worker noted the progress and change in attitude of their child, saying, 'I see this as a success story from where he started.'

Children's individual needs and challenges are fully understood by staff who spend time listening to children, learning about their past experiences and observing their behaviour. This enables them to acquire a good understanding of children's complex needs and preferences, informing how best to deliver their day-to-day care and long-term care planning objectives. One child expressed the view that staff support and 'look after me', stating, 'This is the best home I have lived in.'

Children are supported with their education. School attendance has greatly improved for one child, whose parent said that their child 'was a school refuser and is now attending daily'. All three children are working towards recognised qualifications, with realistic ambitions to go on to further education.

Children gain a better understanding of how to manage their behaviour because staff help them to deal with their feelings of anger, sadness and confusion about their past experiences. Children benefit from regular help and advice from primary healthcare and psychological support services. This helps to maintain and improve their physical health and emotional well-being.

Children choose the kind of leisure and social activities they want to engage in, ranging from playing rugby and attending the gym to special days out. They celebrate achievements and milestones in their lives with those who are important to them. Staff understand that having a strong sense of identity is important to children's emotional well-being. To achieve this, they ensure that children's time with friends and family is positive and beneficial. One parent said that staff help with family time and that they keep the parent up to date with what is happening to their child.

Children are supported to learn the skills they will need for independence. This starts at an early point with informal conversations and encouragement to contribute to daily living tasks. The manager and staff are already thinking ahead to develop more structured independence planning for those who will need it in the next year or so.

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

Children say that they feel safe living in the home. They do not feel the need to run away from the home or engage in risk-taking behaviours. Staff create an environment where children feel listened to and valued, especially when balancing their need for greater independence. When risks do emerge, staff undertake direct work with children and harness the expertise of other professionals to minimise and eliminate such risks.

Overall, behaviour management strategies work well to support children in the choices they make. When physically holding a child is necessary, these incidents are managed well, with opportunities for both staff and children to reflect on how things could be done better or differently in the future to reduce such interventions as much as possible.

Allegations are taken very seriously and promptly responded to, in line with good practice guidelines. Managers and staff reflect on the action taken to ensure that strategies to protect children remain effective. To this end, the home has good working relationships with the local police force responsible for children who go missing from home and local authority safeguarding professionals. The manager also ensures that Ofsted is informed about any serious incidents.

New staff are thoroughly vetted before being allowed to work at the home. Their suitability to continue to work at the home is also monitored through their probationary period. This means that only those suitable to work with vulnerable children are employed at the home.

The home is a safe environment for children to live in. However, on the day of the inspection, a fire door was noted to be wedged open. The provider took immediate steps to remedy this, but a recommendation is raised to ensure that children continue to be protected in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Children benefit from living in this home because the registered manager provides effective leadership and works to ensure that the team is appropriately resourced, trained and supported.

Regular supervision, training and opportunities for reflection give individuals a chance to build resilience and develop in their role. This supportive environment means that the staff team is stable, confident and consistent. This enables children to have consistency of care and build relationships of trust.

Children particularly benefit from the longevity and stability of the staff and their ability to stick with and persevere with children in sometimes very difficult circumstances. Staffing is sufficient to ensure that the competing needs of each individual child at the home are met.

The manager works effectively with the wider system of professionals for each child. He knows the needs and progress of each individual child at the home and acts as an effective advocate on their behalf.

Regular monitoring of the home's operations ensures that where weaknesses emerge, these are recognised and addressed. An important contribution to this process is made by the residential services manager, who provides an additional level of scrutiny, support and challenge to the manager. This enables him to continually evaluate the quality of care and support given to children and implement plans for further improvement.

The home fulfils its statement of purpose and meets the needs of children very well. The children's guide and policies and procedures provide clear, helpful information about services and arrangements for their care. This enables children to know what they can expect from the home and how they will be cared for.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home complies with relevant health and safety legislations. Specifically, fire doors should not be wedged open. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC034851

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1XU

Responsible individual: Abu Siddique

Registered manager: Wayne Gates

Inspectors

Stella Henderson, Social Care Inspector
Mark Broomhead, 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
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