

SC034851

Registered provider: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local-authority-run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people.

Children and young people placed at the home will present with varying degrees of difficulties. They may be traumatised, have been subjected to abuse or have been misunderstood. The home provides a stable and caring environment to develop the children and young people's potential.

A registered manager has been in place since May 2016. She has the relevant experience and qualifications for her post.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 July 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/09/2018	Full	Good
02/10/2017	Full	Good
14/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Staff must help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
- All staff must have their performance and fitness to carry out their role formally appraised at least once annually. This appraisal should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. As part of the performance management process, poor performance should be addressed by a timely plan to bring about improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- The registered person is responsible for deciding what each review should focus on, based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time and any areas of high risk to the children that the home is designed to care for, such as missing or exploitation. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people develop and make progress in this home. Staff have extensive knowledge and skills and are qualified. They nurture and care for the children and young people as any responsible parent would do. This enables the children and young people to thrive. Staff provide predictable daily routines which reflect family living. The children and young people are settled in the home and their behaviours are not causing any concerns for the staff.

The staff are committed to building relationships with, and to understanding, the children and young people. The children and young people told the inspector that they like the staff. They have good relationships with them, particularly their key workers. The children and young people are able to talk to the staff about any worries they have.

Some children and young people were not engaging with education prior to coming to this home. Although there have been some setbacks, staff are very good at liaising with the virtual headteacher, schools and training providers. This ensures that appropriate support is in place and that any difficulties are resolved. Education and training are given a high priority. All the children and young people are encouraged to maintain good attendance at school or training provision, and they succeed in this.

A broad and varied range of activities are offered so that the children and young people can experience positive inclusion within the community. There is a good mix of free or inexpensive activities and annual holidays. These arrangements support the children and young people to develop their self-confidence and improve their social relationships.

From the time the children and young people arrive at the home, they are encouraged to engage in daily independent living skills. However, all their developing skills are not part of an independence plan and are not assessed. As a result, a recommendation is made. This is to ensure that information is available for the next placement move to demonstrate the children and young people's ability to manage budgets, to shop and to cook.

The staff are committed to maintaining relationships with the children and young people's families and friends. The children and young people are able to repair relationships, resulting in successful visits with their families.

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

Staff follow clear strategies to manage the children and young people's risks. The staff keep the children and young people safe. For example, the risks to the children and young people, such as self-harm, substance or alcohol misuse, missing from home and child sexual or criminal exploitation, are clearly identified. Each child or young person has a detailed risk management plan that staff understand and implement.

Since the last inspection, there has been a significant reduction in the amount of time the children and young people are missing. Their offending behaviour has decreased and ceased, and they are not suspected of or subjected to sexual or criminal exploitation.

The management team ensures that staff receive regular safeguarding training. This enables them to recognise and respond effectively to child protection concerns. There is effective partnership working with external safeguarding agencies and the police. When concerns for the children and young people do arise, agreed strategies are made at multi-disciplinary meetings.

The children and young people's behaviour has significantly improved over time, as they

are supported to manage their emotions better. Since the last inspection, only one physical intervention has been used. The children and young people were observed to be nurtured by the staff team and they are regularly praised and rewarded for their positive behaviour. The children and young people get along well and support each other, respecting and accepting each other's individuality.

The children and young people live in a safe environment. Health and safety arrangements and fire safety measures are delegated to staff members and kept under constant review by the management team.

The home environment is well maintained and presented. All aspects of damage are swiftly repaired and made good. Staff and the children and young people respect their environment and they work hard to ensure that the home is presented as they would like. The children and young people's photographs and certificates of achievement are proudly displayed in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is qualified, confident and highly organised. She is supported by an experienced, qualified assistant manager. The management team and staff keep the children and young people at the heart of all they do. There is motivation, inspiration and ambition for the children and young people to do well. The one requirement and the three recommendations made at the last inspection have been met.

All the staff in the home are qualified to level 3 or above. Vacancies in the home are rare and the staff have provided the children and young people with continuity and consistency. Reflective practices are evident and the whole team strives to make sure that the children and young people are happy and achieve better outcomes in life.

The staff told the inspector that they feel supported through regular team meetings and supervision. Records of these show this support, although the staff would benefit from having objectives set at the time of their annual appraisal. This would allow the management team to review staff knowledge and performance and raise the standards in the home to a higher level.

The management team maintains a good day-to-day oversight of staff practice and the children and young people's needs, experiences and their progress. However, the last six-monthly written quality of review report of the home, completed by the registered manager, does not focus on areas of weaknesses and how improvements are to be made.

These monitoring arrangements are supplemented by the independent person, who visits the home each month to consider and report on how the children and young people are safeguarded effectively, and how the conduct of the home promotes their well-being. These reports often fail to capture the views of young people, their parents, social workers and staff and contain few actions for improvement.

The children and young people's case records are detailed. These records reflect the support that the children and young people receive and demonstrate that their wishes and feelings are taken account of. Children and young people have memory books that capture their experiences while living in the home. These records provide a good overview of the children and young people's journeys.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: Jill McGregor

Registered manager: Susan Sloan

Inspector

Mark Kersh, social care inspector

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