

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	14/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC034851
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered provider address	Number One Riverside Smith Street Rochdale Lancashire OL16 1XU
Responsible individual	Jill McGregor
Registered manager	Susan Sloan
Inspector	Michelle Bacon

Inspection date	14/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The manager has taken action to address the three requirements and two recommendations that were made at the last inspection. However, one requirement and one recommendation are repeated, and further areas for improvement have been identified as a result of this inspection. There are improvements in the revised sanction records, which now include all the regulatory requirements. This ensures that the manager is able to fully evaluate the appropriateness of any disciplinary measure and the impact that it has on a young person's behaviour. Since the last inspection, a number of young people have moved into and left the home. One young person has moved on to semi-independent living, while another young person has moved to a placement that is more suitable for their needs. Only one young person who was living at the home at the time of the last inspection remains in placement. They are currently struggling to commit to any further education or training and are only making limited progress in terms of their independence. There is also a mixed picture, in terms of progress and experiences, for the other young people. This is because their attendance at their education provisions is inconsistent and they do not fully engage with specialist services in relation to substance misuse. Although staff work directly with education providers to promote young people's attendance and participation, this has had little impact. Consequently, the opportunity for young people to reach their full academic potential is reduced. Some young people are engaging in specialist work in respect of their emotional health. Specialist help and advice is available to support those young people who smoke and use cannabis. However, staff have struggled to motivate individuals to cooperate with these services. A young person recently moved into the home with already established risk-taking behaviours in respect of substance misuse. However, the risk assessments do not provide staff with clear strategies in terms of monitoring the young person's welfare should they return home under the influence of drugs or alcohol.	

Improvements in some young people's records are required. For example, one young person's local authority care plan refers to their previous placement and does not highlight the care arrangements for this placement. In addition, the internal placement plan lacks detail in relation to the young person's health, education and staying safe plan. The manager and her deputy have begun to monitor the records more rigorously in order to identify any administrative shortfalls. That said, there are still inconsistencies in the medication records. For example, staff do not accurately record the time of day that a young person's medication is administered. However, this has not had a negative impact on the individual's health.

There are good systems in place for managing incidents of young people going missing from the home. Staff try to maintain contact with young people via their mobile phones when the young people are spending time away from the home. The staff work effectively with the local police and social workers to manage any concerns. Following the last inspection, staff are proactively chasing social workers to make sure that independent return home interviews are carried out. These interviews ensure that young people are provided with the opportunity to speak to someone who is independent of the home when they return after a missing-from-home episode.

At the last inspection the manager was asked to ensure that the appraisal process takes into account the views of professionals and children. The manager has requested some feedback, but there has been a limited response. She recognises that this is work in progress, therefore the recommendation is repeated.

There are good systems in place for reviewing and monitoring the quality of care that is provided by the home. The independent visitor reports clearly on whether, in their opinion, young people are effectively safeguarded. This ensures that there is impartial assessment of the home's safeguarding arrangements and promotes the welfare of young people.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/08/2016	Full	Good
24/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/07/2015	Full	Requires improvement
04/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meet(s) the Care Standards Act 2000, 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must make arrangements for a record to be kept of the administration of medication to each child. (Regulation 23(c))	31/03/2017
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (i) 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 harm to the child; specifically, there needs to be clearer risk management in relation to the monitoring of children who are believed to be under the influence of harmful substances. (Regulation 12)	31/03/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Children should be in full-time education while they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plans contained within the care plan or other plan state otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance unless the child's plans indicate this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)
- The appraisal process should take into account the views of other professionals who have worked with the home's members of staff and the views of children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

- The registered person must challenge (under regulation 5) any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete, current and relevant plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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