

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC034851
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	FASHION CORNER, 57-59 DRAKE STREET, ROCHDALE, OL16 1XL

Responsible individual	Mr Paul Marshall
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Miss Ceri Evans

Inspection date	15/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC034851

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is requires improvement because:

- Not all young people have made good educational progress. Attendance and attainment is variable.
- The children's guide has not been reviewed in consultation with young people. The current guide is not an accurate reflection of the home.
- There is little evidence of staff undertaking pro-active key work sessions with young people around risk, safety and protection.
- Not all young people have been offered an independent return interview following missing episodes. This is a missed opportunity to uncover and review information that can help reduce the risk of young people going missing again.
- Damaged caused to the home following incidents of challenging behaviour have not been repaired in a timely manner. This takes away from the overall homely atmosphere of the environment.
- Professional supervision and annual appraisals have not consistently taken place. As a result, staff have not had a formal opportunity to reflect upon their practice.
- Staff have access to a range of e-learning courses. However, the manager has not robustly evaluated the effectiveness of this training and the impact it has had on practice.
- Management monitoring systems are not been effective in considering the opinions of young people, parents and social workers on the quality of care provided in the home.

The children's home strengths

This section should only be included for homes that require improvement or for an inadequate home if there are key headline strengths to report. For good and outstanding home the key strengths will have already been set out above.

- A particular strength of the home is the stability of the team. This allows young people to develop warm and trusting relationships with staff that they respect.
- Young people spoken with during the inspection confirm they feel safe and well cared for. They can easily identify adults they would speak with if they had any worries or concerns.
- Contact between young people and their families is well supported and facilitated. This promotes young people's sense of belonging and ensures they keep connected with their families.
- Young people enjoy a wide range of social activities. This includes day trips out, playing sports, meals out and annual holidays. This promotes inclusion of young people in the wider community.

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 meets 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
6 The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered person must- (2) (c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that any damage to equipment, the building or furniture is repaired or replace in a timely manner.	28/08/2015
7 The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the children's views wishes and feelings standard the registered person must— (2)(c) keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document. This specifically relates to updating the children's guide.	28/08/2015
12 The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that staff - (2) (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe; (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. This is specifically in relation to undertaking proactive direct work with young people around risk taking behaviour and ensuring that	28/08/2015

staff act in accordance with the homes missing from care policy.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience, and have the performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year (Regulation 33 (4) (b)(c))	28/08/2015
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))	28/08/2015

Recommendations

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

The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. This specifically relates to evaluating the effectiveness of e-learning and the impact it has on practice (The Guide, page 53. 10.11)

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. (The Guide, page 61. 13.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2015	CH – Interim	sustained effectiveness
17/06/2014	CH – Full	Adequate
31/01/2014	CH – Interim	Inadequate Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
Young people experience variable outcomes as they settle into life at this home. Some young people with significant behavioural challenges have since moved to alternative placements. This has improved the group dynamics between young people. The staff team, who instil firmer routines and boundaries, help most young people to start to form positive attachments, understand their histories, make positive choices and develop positive self-esteem. Young people spoken with during the inspection report that they have good relationships with staff. One young person said, 'This home is excellent. The people who stand out to me are my keyworkers. I get on with them and they look after me. They are kind of like a parent. I enjoy going on activities, we go for meals out and we're going on holiday in a few weeks, I can't wait'. Professionals confirm that they have observed warm and nurturing interactions between staff and young people. One social worker commented '(name) has told me that she gets on well with staff and I have observed positive interactions between them on a number of occasions'. This demonstrates that young people are building positive relationships with staff and feel comfortable and settled in their company. The education arrangements for young people are variable. Some young people have maintained excellent attendance, completed exams and are looking forward to further study at a local college. Others struggle because they do not always fully engage in lessons. In these instances, young people do not fully reach their potential in education and training. This could limit their future employment prospects and life chances. That said, the home has strong partnerships with education and they do promote high expectations to help young people get back on track. The team also ensure that young people have access to tutors and education materials to support their learning in home. Young people maintain appropriate contact with their family. This is facilitated by staff who understand the importance of helping young people maintain these significant attachments. Staff are conscious about the impact of contact and remain supportive in their approach. They are particularly skilful at developing relationship with families which enable them to work in partnership in the best interest of young people. This reinforces young people's sense of belonging, identity and connectivity with those who are important to them. Young people spoken with during the inspection confirm that their wishes and feelings are listened to and their views and suggestions are considered and acted	

upon when appropriate. They have a clear voice within the home and their views and opinions are actively encouraged by staff. They have a purposeful input and express their opinions about a range of topics such as, menu planning, activity choices, personalised rewards and making decisions about the décor of their bedrooms. Consequently, young people enjoy greater control over their lives which has had a positive impact on their self-esteem.

Young people are cared for in line with their placement plans. They have a say about their plans and confirm that their specific needs are met by the staff team. This includes their needs arising from their personal identity. However, some young people's plans contain ambiguous detail and are not highly individualised. The manager is aware of this shortfall and the plans are currently being re-designed to be more child-friendly. Moving forward, this will enable young people to develop more of an interest in how their care is planned and reviewed.

Young people have lots of opportunities to gain independent life and social skills to help equip them to cope with the transition into adulthood. They are actively supported by staff and involved in various aspects of budgeting, shopping and cooking, all crucial life skills that will help them as they move on in life. Young people also enjoy a range of social, educational and recreational pastimes such as overnight residential activities, trips to places of interest, sports and annual holidays. All of these promote confidence, self-esteem and enable young people to create happy memories of their time in the home.

Young people live in a large house that provides them with a lot of space. Generally the home is welcoming, clean and tidy. However, parts of the home require attention. Several door frames and walls have been damaged during incidents of challenging behaviour and have not been suitably repaired. This detracts from creating a homely atmosphere for young people to live.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Young people say they feel safe in the home and can easily identify staff they would talk to if they had any concerns. Bullying behaviour is not an issue that young people currently identify with. They understand that bullying is not acceptable and the home operates a zero-tolerance policy. Young people spoken with during the inspection confirm that they have confidence that staff will deal with any issues should they arise. This further demonstrates that young people have trusting relationships with those responsible for their care.	

Young people come to the home with high levels of risk taking behaviour such as going missing, substance misuse and sexual exploitation. Over time, these behaviours have reduced. When young people do go missing, staff respond quickly, making determined efforts to locate them, including doing their utmost to maintain contact with them. The home has forged good links with other professionals to address missing from care concerns. For example, the police, social worker's and the manager of the home work collaboratively to address incidents of significant concern. This joint working has proved effective at reducing the incidents of missing and the associated risks of child sexual exploitation.

Staff have not always adhered to homes policies and procedures in relation to missing from care return interviews. This means that young people haven't always been offered the opportunity to speak with an independent person upon their return. Most young people prefer to speak with staff who they know. However, there is little evidence of these discussions taking place. This is a missed opportunity to gather information, understand the underlying reasons for missing episodes to help young people make safer choices.

Young people have individualised risk assessments and separate absconding plans. They provide a good overview of identified behaviours, warning signs and control measures. Staff are nurturing and consistent and this greatly benefits young people as they know what is expected of them and the consequence of any unacceptable behaviour. Staff place an emphasis on promoting positive behaviour through praise, rewards and incentives and encourage young people to talk through problems on a day to day basis. However, there is little evidence of these discussions taking place. For example, not all discussions around safety, protection and risk are recorded. This means there is little evidence of qualitative pro-active project work being undertaken with young people. This is a missed opportunity to demonstrate and evaluate the full impact of direct work.

The selection and recruitment of staff is thorough. This prevents unsuitable adults from being able to work with young people in this home. Since the last inspection there have been no reported allegations relating to any staff in this home. Staff spoken with during the inspection had a clear understanding of safeguarding procedures and reporting of concerns.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
There has been no registered manager at this home since May 2015. Appropriate interim arrangements are in place. The current manager is an experienced social care professional who is suitably qualified and has the necessary skills and	

experience to undertake the role on an interim basis.

There is evidence that in the short time the manager has been in post, he is making good effort to improve the service. He is determined to improve outcomes for young people and the future plans for the home are supported by a realistic development plan, which helps the manager and team to drive the service forward.

Good staffing levels ensures the team's good engagement with young people, which helps provide good support and meet most of their needs. Leaders and managers are well-motivated to improve the quality of care for young people. Staff spoken with during the inspection report that they feel supported by their manager and colleagues. They are very positive about the impact the new manager has had on young people's lives and the running of the home. One experienced member of staff praised the manager for his transparency, communication and leadership skills. This demonstrates that there is a clear focus on development and improvement to the service.

While some improvements have been noted, not all staff receive regular supervision. This hinders the manager's ability to routinely monitor and help improve staff's performance, competency and conduct. Furthermore, annual appraisals have not been completed. Also, there is no system to take into account the views of young people. Consequently, the manager is not able to confidently assess and review practice and professional development.

The vast majority of training has been conducted online. The team have not had an opportunity in team meetings or supervisions to discuss and reflect upon their learning. The manager does not have a system to evaluate the effectiveness of such training. This means they are unable to ascertain whether it is sufficient to meet young people's needs or demonstrate the impact this has had on professional practice.

The manager undertakes regular monitoring of the home to ensure it operates in accordance with the Statement of Purpose. Evidence gathered at this inspection indicates that the manager takes appropriate steps to rectify shortfalls quickly. This ensures young people remain at the heart of the home. However, the views of young people, their parents and professionals have not been sought with sufficient rigor. This means that key individuals have not had the opportunity to offer their views on how to improve the service. This significantly weakens the robustness of monitoring systems.

The Statement of Purpose has been recently updated and accurately reflects the service provided. However, the children's guide is not up to date. The current guide does not capture the views of young people, nor are they included in the development or revision of the guide. This is a missed opportunity to create a child-focused guide which is accurate and relevant to young people.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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 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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015