

SC034922

Registered provider: Rochdale Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this children's home. The home is registered to provide care for four children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

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

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 December 2024 and 22 January 2025

The inspection started on 17 December 2024. The inspectors returned on 22 January 2025 to gather additional evidence in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence policy](#).

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: 11 March 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2024	Full	Good
21/03/2023	Full	Good
19/10/2021	Full	Good
28/08/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is welcoming and maintained to a good standard. Although a busy home, there is a sense of calmness throughout. Children's bedrooms are personalised, and communal areas are decorated to create a homely atmosphere. Observations of the children show they feel comfortable and at ease in the home.

When children are moving into the home, the manager ensures that careful planning takes place to make sure that risks have been considered. This also ensures that all children are suitably matched. There is a clearly defined transition plan, and children are provided with opportunities to visit and meet the staff and the other children. There is a beautiful 'welcome to the home' book and specific children's guides. These provide children with a child-centred understanding of the home and help them to feel less anxious.

When children move on from the home, there are planned endings to support their identified needs. Children's wishes and views are also fully considered. For one child, this has meant they have experienced continued stability through a supported lodgings arrangement facilitated by a staff member.

The staff team captures children's creative and unique memories of their experiences in the home. One child was able to experience a few holidays with staff before they moved on to be independent. This helps children to remember positive experiences and achievements.

Staff understand the importance of family time for children. They support children to have regular time with their families in accordance with their plans. The manager works sensitively to enable children to have precious time with their families on special occasions such as Christmas.

Children's educational achievements vary. Some children have successfully completed their secondary education and gone on to college. However, some children are not consistently accessing education. Staff strive to create improved learning outcomes and advocate on behalf of the children. One child did not have an educational placement; however, a staff member organised a work placement for this child.

When children are not in full-time education, staff ensure that they have a daily planner in place to promote learning in the home. However, these are not fully embedded into the routines of the home. As a result, children do not always have structure to their day and do not engage in educational activities with staff.

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

Children's individual needs and vulnerabilities are well understood by staff. Risk management plans are personal and regularly reviewed, focusing on areas that are central to each child.

The provider has failed to notify the regulator about some safeguarding incidents. This limits independent oversight of safeguarding practice. However, the provider has acted to keep children safe.

When children go missing from the home, staff work closely with involved agencies, identifying actions that increase the safety of children. Detailed management oversight and learning are recorded. Team meetings are used to address such learning. This promotes a consistent approach in keeping the children safe.

Staff promote children's independence by using a balanced approach. This includes enabling children to have time away from the home without having restrictions. This includes spending time with friends in the community. Direct work with children is purposeful, capturing the child's views and understanding. This allows children the opportunity to take informed risks.

The collective relationship with placing authorities and professionals further strengthens the home's safeguarding efforts. Regular communication and information-sharing ensure that all parties are informed and aligned in their approach to protecting the children. This teamwork enhances the overall safety and security of the home.

During a serious incident at the home, the staff undertook proactive measures to ensure the children's safety. Immediate actions were taken to secure the environment. Appropriate interventions were implemented to address the situation effectively, and the manager has sought additional support through external agencies. The staff's actions reflect a strong commitment to safeguarding children and collaborating with external agencies to promote the well-being of the children in their care.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a committed, experienced and reflective manager who has a clear perspective of the home's strengths and areas for development. The manager displays a clear ambition for each child and is passionate about the quality of care that is provided to children. However, when incidents occur, these are not consistently recorded to evidence that the child has had the opportunity to fully discuss and reflect. At times, there are no records that staff have been spoken to following incidents. This may mean that the records do not reflect the quality of care offered to children.

Children, staff and other professionals hold the manager in high esteem; all feedback has been highly complementary. One parent said, 'It has been the best possible home for [name of child]. I know they love it, and the staff love them. [Name of child]'s

behaviour has really changed.' The ethos and commitment of the home are embedded across the staff team.

The management team and staff challenge professionals when they consider that care planning for children is not reflective of their current needs. However, not all children have access to independent advocacy. This limits children's participation in their care planning.

The staff team is stable and has a wealth of experience. New staff bring their experiences from other settings, which adds value and enthusiasm to the whole staff team. The team cares deeply for the children.

Regular supervision and team meetings provide staff with guidance and support, helping them develop the skills needed to meet the children's needs. The focus on continuous improvement helps to ensure that the home remains a safe and supportive place for children.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that following incidents, children are spoken to by an independent person, taking into consideration their feelings, views and wishes about the measure used, and that staff are provided with a debrief to reflect on the measure. In particular, ensure that significant incidents are evaluated with scrutiny, taking into consideration any possible learning outcomes that can be implemented within children's risk management plans, and that staff are proactively developing practice and learning from these.	30 January 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—	30 January 2025

a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that Ofsted is notified of significant incidents, such as fires.	
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— promote opportunities for each child to learn informally. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(v))	22 March 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that they and the home's staff act as champions for their children. They should ensure children have access to an independent advocate to enable their wishes and views to be given due consideration in their care planning and preparation for leaving the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)

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: SC034922

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rochdale Borough Council

Registered provider address: Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1XL

Responsible individual: Abu Siddique

Registered manager: Paul Lamey

Inspector

Angeline Clarke, Social Care Inspector
Sally Mitchell, 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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