

SC034922

Registered provider: Rochdale 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. It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. Three children have moved out of the home since the last inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2021.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 August 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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.

Date of last inspection: 22 January 2025

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: requires improvement to be good

The experiences of the children living in this home have been varied. Some children have made positive progress and have moved on to live independently in the community. However, other children have not always maintained their progress, and some have even regressed at times. Children have continued to take part in serious and risky behaviours that are harmful to their health and well-being. Although the staff understand the risks, the support and care they have offered the children has not led to their increased safety.

Only one child has lived at the home in recent months. The manager, along with senior leaders, has acknowledged that they cannot fully meet the child's needs, and they have been actively involved in identifying a more suitable setting for them. The manager, along with the staff, has demonstrated a great deal of sensitivity and understanding, and they are focused on minimising any unnecessary distress that a further move may cause the child.

The home environment continues to improve, with children's bedrooms and communal areas being recently redecorated. The overall maintenance and decor are good, and the home feels welcoming and is a pleasant place to be, with plenty of space for children to engage in activities or spend time relaxing in their own space.

Managers and staff work effectively with partner agencies to promote children's physical and mental health. Regular case management meetings are held with external professionals and the local authority's clinical team. Specialist help is made available to children according to their needs. This help is made available as soon as it is needed. However, for the child currently living at the home, this help has not yet had a meaningful impact on improving their day-to-day experiences.

Staff encourage children to get up at a reasonable time, eat at regular mealtimes and participate in constructive activities, such as swimming, pamper nights and visits to places of interest. The results have been mixed, with some children often declining to take part. Despite this, the staff remain persistent in their efforts to provide children with new and varied experiences that they can enjoy.

Some children have struggled with their education attendance. Staff understand these struggles and work closely with education providers and the virtual school to tackle any barriers to learning. While progress is mixed, staff continue to advocate for children to ensure that they receive the right support to progress in their learning.

Children's rights are respected and promoted. Since the last inspection, the manager has established improved links with an independent advocate who now offers drop-ins at the home. This helps to ensure that children have someone separate from the staff team to talk to and have a say in what is important to them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There has been a very unsettled period at the home, with one child exhibiting high-risk behaviours. The increased risks have been recognised by the management team, and further training and development opportunities have been implemented to assist the staff in caring for children with complex needs. Additionally, practitioners are working together to gain a full overview of the child's situation and offer a coordinated approach to support. However, despite these efforts, risks have continued to increase, and there have been further incidents of the child going missing and engaging in behaviours that could place them, or others, at risk of harm.

The child goes missing on a regular basis. There are clear plans in place that help to guide staff practice when this occurs. This includes searching for the child and maintaining close liaison with the local police to locate the child as quickly as possible. Overall, staff understand the risks. However, on a very small number of occasions, staff have not been vigilant enough, meaning that the child was able to evade safeguarding processes and leave the home or activities undetected. On these occasions, practice has fallen below expected standards and resulted in increased risks to the child. Positively, the manager has taken action to address this and has revised ways of working to reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

Risk assessments are reviewed and regularly updated. Overall, these plans identify the level of support and action required by staff to mitigate all risks. However, the inspector identified an absence of a coherent risk assessment in relation to child sexual exploitation. The manager took immediate action during the inspection to rectify this. He is taking action to share this assessment with the staff team so that they are fully informed and guided in relation to this area of risk.

Not all staff have consistently followed the agreed method of behaviour management, as set out in the statement of purpose. On a small number of occasions, albeit significant, staff have responded in a punitive way to children's behaviour. Consequences are not restorative and are focused on the removal of things that are important to children. These responses have limited opportunities for staff to support children in learning how to manage their feelings effectively, and they do not help prevent further escalation.

Allegations and complaints from others are taken seriously and investigated, with appropriate action taken by the manager. Recruitment of new staff is also robust, with appropriate checks and references being sought before new starters join the team.

Significant events are notified to the relevant parties in a timely manner, and responses to these are clearly recorded in children's records.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home benefits from having an experienced registered manager. He is knowledgeable and demonstrates a commitment to children in his care. A deputy manager supports him, and they work well as a team. Both acknowledge the shortfalls identified at this inspection. They are reflective practitioners and know their strengths and areas for development well.

When needed, the manager raises placement concerns appropriately with senior leaders in the placing authority. He, along with the team, supports children when they move on to alternative settings. The manager is aware of the importance of promoting continuity for children but also acknowledges when a placement is no longer effective in meeting complex needs. When placements have ended, they have done so in a planned way. The manager has engaged in learning and reflected on practice at the home to identify potential areas for improvement in the future. This demonstrates an ongoing commitment to improving the service and meeting the complex and challenging needs of children.

External professionals said the manager and staff team communicate effectively with them and share weekly updates of the child's progress. Collaborative practice is something the manager and staff do well, which was echoed in the comments received by several external professionals who the inspector spoke with during the inspection.

There are sufficient staff to meet children's needs. The staff members spoken to demonstrated a strong commitment to their roles, but they also expressed feelings of fatigue and burnout during this challenging period. There has been some sickness in the team, but gaps in the rota have been covered by staff from the local authority's other homes and casual staff. This has helped to reduce the levels of disruption for the child.

All staff receive regular supervision, which enables them to discuss and reflect on their practice. Staff spoken with as part of this inspection reported that the support they have received from the manager is welcomed, and they speak highly of his approach.

An independent person carries out monthly external monitoring of the home. When shortfalls are identified, the manager implements action plans swiftly.

Internal monitoring is less robust. Record-keeping is not systematic enough and prevents effective oversight. Examples include an out-of-date training matrix, meaning that it was difficult to track what staff have attended. Additionally, information to inform data collection, such as the number of police call-outs to the home, is disjointed. This makes it difficult to ascertain the information needed quickly. In response, the manager has tasked the deputy to review some of the systems to help facilitate improvements.

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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	6 October 2025
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— 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 any harm to the child; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare, and	6 October 2025

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v)(vi)(b)) This specifically relates to ensuring that staff identify and respond effectively to reduce all potential risks for children and that children's risk assessments are updated to offer clear guidance and strategies for guiding staff practice.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; and protect and promote each child's welfare. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)) This specifically relates to ensuring that children receive consistent care that helps them to build trusting relationships with all staff and that children's behaviour is managed consistently in line with the home's chosen model of practice.	6 October 2025

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: Number One Riverside, Smith Street, Rochdale OL16 1XU

Responsible individual: Abu Siddique

Registered manager: Paul Lamey

Inspector

Ceri Evans, His Majesty's Inspector, Social Care

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