

## Children's homes inspection - Full

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>10/11/2015</b>                                                                      |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC035339</b>                                                                        |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Full</b>                                                                            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's home</b>                                                                 |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council</b>                                             |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham, OL1 1UT</b> |

|                               |                       |
|-------------------------------|-----------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Kim Scragg</b>     |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Sally Hallwood</b> |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Sarah Oldham</b>   |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>10/11/2015</b>              |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>sustained effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                 | <b>None</b>                    |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                          |                                |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                 | <b>Outstanding</b>             |
| The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care. |                                |
| <b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Outstanding</b>             |
| <b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Outstanding</b>             |

## SC035339

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is outstanding because:**

- Children receive highly individualised care from a consistent and experienced staff team, who know and support their needs very well.
- Effective safeguarding arrangements promote the safety and welfare of children. This has resulted in a significant reduction of absences from the home and risk taking behaviour.
- Staff fully engage children by listening and involving them in their care and support. This means they feel valued and fully included in their current and future plans.
- Effective promotion of education results in increased attendance and attainment, with all children making excellent progress. This includes young people aged 16 gaining GCSE's and additional qualifications enabling progression onto college and work based apprenticeships.
- The management of the home is highly effective. Positive professional working relationships between a number of agencies have enabled continuity of support. This has contributed to excellent outcomes for children, including moving on to long term foster placements, semi-independence and adulthood.
- The culture and ethos of the home provides a nurturing and homely environment which enables children to make progress, feel safe and grow in confidence. The young people say they feel really safe and supported and regard it very much as their home.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

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

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 11/02/2015      | CH - Interim    | sustained effectiveness |
| 30/09/2014      | CH - Full       | Outstanding             |
| 25/03/2014      | CH - Interim    | Good Progress           |
| 23/01/2014      | CH - Full       | Outstanding             |

## Inspection Judgements

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| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>outstanding</b> |
| <p>Children and young people develop very positive relationships with staff, built on mutual respect and trust. Staff have high aspirations for them and this is reflected within the planning, care and support provided. One young person said: 'this is the best home I have lived in. Staff care about all of us and we care about them. I can't explain why it is so good, it just is. It feels like a home should be, warm, safe, friendly and happy.'</p> <p>Staff welcome children and young people moving into the home warmly, ensuring they have information about the home and their placement. They are fully encouraged to contribute their wishes and views to their individual care and daily living arrangements. This is through discussion with staff and one-to one key work sessions. In addition, formal and informal children's meetings take place. One young person said 'we all have a say in things about the home and what we want to do but it isn't real life to keep having a meeting, it's much better to discuss things as they happen. We all get together at meal times or in the evening so we can talk about things then.'</p> <p>Children and young people make excellent progress in their educational attendance and attainment. One education provider commented: 'the staff have really gone the extra mile to support (name) with his education. They attend meetings encourage with homework and share information with us. This has resulted in 100% attendance and engagement where previously it was below 50%.' Other young people have achieved success in their exams, obtaining GCSE's, BTECH and ASDAN qualifications. These qualifications contribute towards future education and career plans which include going to college and accessing apprenticeships.</p> <p>Activities and the development of interests and hobbies are encouraged. This includes use of community leisure resources, playing football, attending youth clubs and developing interests for young people to potentially pursue when they leave the home. Recent trips out have included going on walks in the countryside, meals out and trips to the cinema. Young people were recently involved in planning and going on holiday to Spain which they really enjoyed.</p> <p>Young people receive well designed support to prepare them for leaving the home and moving onto adulthood. They learn skills in budgeting, shopping and preparing meals. The home has a separate flat attached; enabling young people to gain an understanding of living independently while still receiving support from the home's staff team if required. This has proved a helpful insight for young people in</p> |                    |

preparation for full independence.

The importance for young people to have appropriate ongoing relationships with family and friends forms part of individual plans. One parent said: 'we are always made to feel welcome when we visit and the time spent with our child is great. We are included in her care and we can see she likes the home and staff who do their best to help her and keep her safe.' Children and young people also feel relationships are promoted well and where there are restrictions or ongoing safeguarding measures implemented, these are discussed and explained to them to help them have an understanding of the reasons why; which helps maintain their safety and wellbeing.

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| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <b>outstanding</b> |
| <p>Staff are well trained and experienced in safeguarding children, including understanding risks associated with missing from home and potential child sexual exploitation. Safeguarding forms part of the individual care and risk management strategies. Risk assessments, developed in consultation with placing social workers, other professionals and young people are highly effective in minimising risks. Strategies implemented regarding episodes of missing are resulting in a significant decrease in this occurring. The home works in partnership with other agencies including police and the child sexual exploitation team to minimise risks to young people through education, support, and guidance. This has resulted in consistently positive outcomes and reduction of these risks.</p> <p>Young people's behaviour is promoted by being encouraged to have respect for others and a greater understanding of boundaries. Discussions are held regarding appropriate sanctions for negative behaviour with young people; this enables them to have an input into their own behaviour strategies. Positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded which enables young people to feel valued. As a result of these strategies, behaviour is positive with a decrease in sanctions made.</p> <p>Young people know how to make a complaint or raise a concern. Appropriate action is taken to ensure effective action is taken to address complaints. One young person said: 'I know that if there is anything that happens and I make a complaint, the manager will listen and provide a response in writing. She will also support me to make a formal complaint to a senior manager in the authority if I'm not happy with something. She is fair.'</p> <p>Robust health and safety checks throughout the home ensure any potential</p> |                    |

hazards are quickly resolved; thereby promoting a safe environment for all who live and work within it. Young people know what to do in the event of a fire and take part in fire evacuation drills to further promote their safety.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | <b>outstanding</b> |
| <p>The manager became the Registered Manager of the home in May 2011. She is qualified; holding a Diploma in Social Work and residential management. She sets high standards for the care and support of young people at the home. This ethos underpins the practice and commitment of the staff team.</p> <p>The manager, deputy, and staff team have remained a consistent source of support and guidance for young people and this has contributed to the overall stability of placements. Staff receive regular supervision to enable them to reflect on practice and the care provided. All mandatory training is completed and refreshed as well as using staff meetings to further enhance skills and knowledge through updated research and development. These measures ensure staff fully reflect on practice and seek additional ways to enhance the care provided.</p> <p>Young people speak very positively of their lives at the home. The vast majority of them have benefited from living at the home for a period of time. One young person said: 'previously I have lived in a number of homes and have always been determined to break down my placement. I came here with the intention of doing it again, but staff have supported, encouraged, and stuck by me. There have been some difficult times but I know staff really care about me and the others, that's what makes this place feel like home.' This highly positive affirmation of the effectiveness of the manager and staff demonstrates how consistent care practice can have a significant impact on outcomes for young people.</p> <p>The Statement of Purpose reflects the aims and objectives of the home and is available for social workers, parents and other interested parties. A children's guide provides information in a child friendly format to young people about living at the home; enabling them to have a good understanding of what it will mean for them. Both documents contain information about relevant agencies involved with the home and who to complain to if they have any concerns. They are reviewed on a regular basis to ensure all information remains current.</p> <p>The manager has a good understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for ongoing development. She works in partnership with other professionals to gain their views and responds to monthly independent monitoring visit reports</p> |                    |

to address any shortfalls identified. Additionally, her monitoring of the home enables her and the staff to continue to deliver support and care which enhances the lives and outcomes for young people living at the home.

Young people's records, including care plans, are well-organised, maintained securely and reflect the young person's history and progress. The manager, through regular auditing of files, identifies where there are any gaps in recording; action taken ensures shortfalls are rectified in a timely manner.

## 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*.

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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