

SC035339

Registered provider: Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and managed by a local authority. The home can accommodate seven children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

One part of the home is in an adjoining annexe and is available to young people who have lived at the home for a period of time, to help them gain skills in living semi-independently in preparation to leave care.

Inspection date: 17 July 2019

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 21 November 2018

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 last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, three young people have moved into the home and three young people have left.

The registered manager's assessment and planning for new arrivals at the home is weak. The registered manager does not fully consider how the arrival of new young people will impact on the dynamics of the home. Neither does she consider how staff will manage the competing needs of young people.

This poor planning has contributed to young people's behaviours becoming increasingly unsettled over the last six months. This has included increasing incidents of young

people going missing, self-harming and being aggressive towards staff.

Staff lack the skills and knowledge to respond effectively to such safeguarding concerns. Because of this, young people are not always kept safe. Young people themselves say that they do not always feel safe.

Risk assessments do not accurately reflect the current needs of young people. This shows a lack of understanding about the risks that the young people may be exposed to. Risk assessments do not satisfactorily detail how potential risks can be reduced or managed.

Staff are not able to support young people to behave and adhere to home rules and boundaries. Staff's repeated use of sanctions only serves to create barriers between themselves and young people. Young people say that staff stop activities as a form of punishment. This leaves young people feeling bored and frustrated. This only increases the likelihood of young people misbehaving.

The majority of young people are not in full-time education. This means that they are not able to meet their academic potential.

Staff do not ensure that young people have a safe, pleasant and homely environment in which to live. Damaged walls, doors, furniture and electrical appliances contribute to the home being unloved.

The registered manager does not ensure that staff look after young people in a way that is consistent with the home's statement of purpose. Young people say that staff do not always listen to them or show that they care. This leaves young people feeling upset and frustrated.

Young people have recently met with senior managers to express their views and raise concerns about how they are being looked after. Follow-up action into young people's feedback is ongoing.

The registered manager has failed to demonstrate that she is an effective leader. Senior managers have also been slow to recognise that the registered manager is not keeping young people safe or supporting them to make progress. This reflects the limitations of the internal and external monitoring of the home.

A new independent visitor has recently been appointed. However, the quality of these visits has been poor. As a result, there have been missed opportunities to identify the areas of improvement and take effective action.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2018	Full	Good
05/10/2017	Full	Good
20/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/12/2016	Full	Good

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, 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcome it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and support them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation (6)(1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)) In particular, the damaged freezer and dining chairs should be replaced or repaired. Redecoration to the home should be completed including to marked and damaged walls, doors and ceilings. The greenhouse and shed should be made safe and either removed or repaired.	16/08/2019
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare;	16/08/2019

help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	
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— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment. Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv))	16/08/2019
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)ix)(x))	16/08/2019

*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(a)(i)(iii)(b)(d))	16/08/2019
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that— 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; ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to 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)(e)(h))	16/08/2019
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b)(2)(b)(ii))	16/08/2019

The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))	16/08/2019
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom 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.

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: SC035339

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, Civic Centre, West Street, Oldham OL1 1UT

Responsible individual: Patsy Burrows

Registered manager: Dianne Chesters

Inspectors

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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