

SC036026

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority-run children's home. The home provides care and accommodation for up to five children or young people. The children or young people receive care that supports them to manage their emotions and have positive childhood experiences.

The long-standing registered manager has left the home prior to the inspection. A new manager is in post but is not yet registered.

The home is about to change its purpose and function.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2018	Full	Good
25/07/2017	Full	Good
30/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/04/2016	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(5)) In particular, ensure that the admission of young people adheres to the matching criteria set out in the home's statement of purpose. The registered persons must take into account the imminent change in the home's statement of purpose and function when making decisions about the admission of young people to the home.	28/12/2019
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who– take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7(1)(c)) In particular, ensure that young people have access to a working computer, the internet and Wi-Fi to support their education, learning and social time, unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this would be inappropriate.	09/12/2019
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– understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff–	28/12/2019

provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably.
(Regulation 6(1), (2)(b)(vii))

In particular, ensure that the home is decorated and furnished to a high standard throughout and that young people have a working television in the lounge.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people make good progress. Risks have reduced and education attendance has improved. The children and young people have much more positive social interaction, which has seen them build their self-esteem and which encourages positive relationships.

The children and young people benefit immensely from the trusting relationships that staff build with them. Children and young people said: 'The best thing here is the staff. I have my favourites' and 'I get on with all the staff'. These dependable relationships enable children and young people to listen and respond to the guidance given by staff.

The children and young people have access to health services. They receive routine health check-ups. In addition, some children and young people receive support to ensure that they maintain good mental health and emotional well-being. This support preserves or improves their immediate and long-term health.

All the children and young people have a school or education placement. Some children and young people have excellent school attendance. For others, staff continue to assist them to increase their attendance by building their self-confidence and supporting their emotional well-being. This gives young people long-term benefits and helps them to achieve good exam results and access further education.

All the children and young people enjoy regular contact with their families. The staff are strongly committed to supporting the children and young people to rebuild and maintain these relationships. These positive relationships bring great benefits to the children and young people by ensuring that they maintain essential support networks.

The children and young people grow in self-esteem as they become more involved in new life experiences. They participate more because of the positive interaction with the staff. The children and young people also take part in a variety of social and leisure activities. These include piano lessons, ice-skating sessions, trips to the coast, going out to restaurants and driving go-karts.

The children and young people gain a range of independence skills. They take part in everyday chores around the home, such as cooking, and they learn how to use public transport independently as young teenagers. The staff have a nurturing approach and balance children and young people's needs so that they learn how to care for themselves according to their age and understanding.

The children and young people benefit greatly because the staff know them well. The staff support and care for them as set out in their placement and support plans. Most children and young people receive direct-work sessions on the identified support areas, in line with their plans.

The home environment for the children and young people is safe. Routine health and safety checks are undertaken. The children and young people's daily life experience would be further enhanced by improvements to the environment that they live in. The decoration and furnishings in the main dining room and lounge are showing signs of wear and tear, with marks and some damage. The television has been broken for several weeks. One kitchen unit door has a handle missing. The provider has not afforded the children and young people internet and Wi-Fi access for over a year. This has not provided the children and young people with access either to support their learning or as a resource for use in their social time. This sets them apart from their peers and those children and young people who are not looked after.

The imminent changes are having a negative effect on the children and young people, who are unsure about what the future holds for them. A number of staff whom the children and young people know well are about to move from the home. A new, experienced manager has commenced, and a new team of staff are due to start who will implement the changes of the home's function. A young person said: 'This was my home; it is not now. The staff are the best thing about living here and they are going. I have stayed out at my friend's house most nights in the last month.' In progressing the changes for the home, the provider has failed to fully consider the impact on the children and young people currently living at the home.

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

The staff know and understand the risks and vulnerabilities of each child and young person. The staff engage with the children and young people well so that they understand the consequences of negative and risk-taking behaviour. This is further enhanced by the children and young people having access to other professionals to provide guidance and assist in keeping them safe. The level-headed and timely response to risk-taking behaviour has helped to reduce potential and actual harm.

The knowledge that the staff have in relation to identified risks is underpinned by detailed risk assessments that clearly set out the strategies required to minimise and reduce such behaviour.

The need for any form of physical intervention is a rare occurrence. This is because the staff understand the triggers and the presentation of negative and challenging behaviour. The staff use known strategies to divert and de-escalate situations successfully.

The staff understand and follow the home's procedure for children and young people who go missing from home. Return-home interviews are routinely conducted, along with discussions about how to keep safe. There has been a reduction in the number of missing-from-home incidents.

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

At the time of the inspection, the home was about to change its purpose and function. The long-standing manager had recently left. The staff have followed the lead of an experienced, committed and child-centred registered manager. The children and young people flourish in a nurturing and supportive environment and respond well to the care provided.

The staff are experienced and well trained. Most staff hold the level 3 qualification in caring for children and young people. This is enhanced by essential mandatory and more specialist training. This training includes child protection, behaviour management, first aid, child development and attachment, mental health and the issue of exploitation.

The staff benefit from regular formal supervision sessions to discuss the care of the children and young people and their own training and development. Good communication systems exist, which consist of regular staff meetings and daily shift handovers to provide everyone with up-to-date information. This assists in providing continuity of care for the children and young people.

Staffing levels have been increased to meet the needs of the children and young people in residence. Two young people have one-to-one support and supervision. This has afforded the children the care and attention that they require.

The manager has well-established, positive links with many agencies. The staff have regular access to mental health professionals. There are strong links to a child criminal exploitation worker, a police officer and other professionals. This ensures that staff can access support and advice quickly to further meet the complex needs of the children and young people.

The manager has an established and thorough monitoring system to ensure that good care is provided. One recommendation made at the time of the last inspection has been met. All children and young people have an education placement which meets their learning needs. However, one requirement and recommendation have not been met. All placements have not been made in line with the home's statement of purpose. The children and young people do not have access to the internet and Wi-Fi.

The manager professionally challenges others when the needs of children and young people are compromised, documents are not provided or procedures are not followed. However, the home's statement of purpose and admissions procedure have not been followed by the local authority. The home's manager has been directed to take a child when the admission assessment indicated that this placement was not a match. The needs of this child conflicted with those of the children and young people already living at the home. These decisions have impacted negatively on all children and young people living at the home. In addition, the local authority has made a placement at the home when there is an imminent change in the home's statement of purpose.

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 difference 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.

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: SC036026

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual: Carly Speechley

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Debbie Foster: 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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