

SC036917

Registered provider: Royal Borough of Greenwich

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to five children aged between 11 and 18 years who experience social and emotional difficulties.

The registered manager is suitably qualified and has been registered with Ofsted since 31 March 2007.

The registered manager was not present for this inspection. The inspection was facilitated by the responsible individual, deputy manager and temporary manager.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 September 2022

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: 19 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/10/2021	Full	Outstanding
27/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
26/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
10/10/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide nurturing emotional support for children who have experienced trauma. Children are supported to improve their routines, so that become more independent, resilient and confident. Children are generally happy and their social workers express satisfaction with the quality of care they receive.

Staff support children to achieve their goals. Staff also support children with accessing the appropriate health services, which includes mental health, substance misuse and sexual health services.

Children's achievements include completing their GCSEs, returning to college after a period of non-attendance and actively seeking work. Staff celebrate children's milestones, such as birthdays and moving into semi-independence. Older children benefit from receiving a weekly budget to buy their shopping and prepare their own meals.

Staff provide excellent support for young people and children who have moved on from the home. One young person who has moved on from the home asked a staff member to support her with the birth of her own child. This is a testament to the strength and quality of relationships that staff build with children.

Children have an active voice at the home. They help with planning daily meals and social activities. Children have made complaints and raised concerns through house meetings. Children feel confident to share their concerns with staff.

There have been significant delays in essential repairs to the home. Children told the inspector that their home was sometimes cold and uncomfortable, and that repairs were 'on hold' for a long time. Managers have escalated all concerns, but this has not been effective in reducing delays. This means that children do not live in a homely physical environment.

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

Children spoken to during the inspection confirm that they now feel safe at the home. However, one child reported that they have in the recent past felt unsafe due to bullying by another child. Leaders and managers address concerns of bullying and identify when they are unable to keep a child safe. They work with the child's placing authority to ensure a smooth transition and offer outreach and support to the children who have left the home.

Staff identify, understand, and manage risks to children effectively. Staff encourage children to reflect on their challenges through problem-solving and solution-focused conversations. Staff clearly define their expectations regarding children's behaviour.

This enables children to take responsibility for their actions and own personal growth.

Staff have a very good understanding of children's trauma and their emotional needs. Staff go to great lengths to support children and help them to make safer choices. However, behaviour support plans do not set out what actions staff should take for specific risks such as children going missing from care or substance misuse. This has led to an inconsistent response by one staff member when managing a child who was under the influence of substances. And although, on this occasion, the child remained safe, this has the potential to impact on the consistent safeguarding of children.

There have been no allegations against staff since the last inspection. Staff receive appropriate safeguarding training. However, some members of staff do not demonstrate a good knowledge of the home's whistle-blowing policies. Additionally, one staff member did not demonstrate a good understanding of what action they should take if a child made an allegation against a manager. This compromises safeguarding practice.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. However, not all incident records are accurate or reflect all actions that staff take to keep children safe. Managers do not consistently keep good records of staff debriefs. This compromises leaders' and managers' oversight of the quality of records and is a missed opportunity to make and demonstrate continuous improvements.

Restraint of children is rare. However, leaders and managers do not have effective recording systems to record and evaluate the use of restraint. Leaders and managers put plans in place to address this shortfall during this inspection.

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

Managers and staff demonstrate commitment and resilience. It has been a challenging year caring for children, often in emergency situations. Managers have focused their attention on keeping children safe. Managers have also had to focus much of their time and attention on keeping the home environment safe while awaiting repairs. As a result, some leadership functions have been compromised and require improvement to be consistently good.

Leaders and managers do not demonstrate good oversight of children's records. This has resulted in inaccuracies, inconsistencies, and omissions in children's records. This does not accurately reflect children's experiences in the home.

Leaders and managers have escalated their concerns about delays to the repairs to the property, and the delays in addressing the fire risk assessors' recommendations. However, strategic partnerships for this home are not yet effective, and this has impacted negatively on children's day-to-day experiences. Consequently, children have waited too long to have their home environment made comfortable and in

good repair. Arrangements to address the fire risk assessor's recommendations were made by senior leaders during the inspection.

Managers take effective action to protect children. However, the registered person does not ensure that notifications of all significant events relating to the welfare and protection of children are made to the regulator. This is a breach of regulations.

Reports completed by the independent person do not consistently provide a view about the safety and well-being of children in the home. This does not meet regulations.

Leaders and managers work very well with safeguarding professionals. One police officer said, 'Staff absolutely understand child sexual exploitation, child criminal exploitation, risks for missing children and extrafamilial risk. This care home is one that I will always remember as being very good.' However, managers do not routinely challenge the local authority to ensure that independent return home interviews take place for all children. This issue was also raised as a recommendation at the last inspection.

Staff say that they feel valued and that they take pride in making a positive difference to children's lives. Staff praise the supportive team and their supportive managers. Staff benefit from therapeutic support, a wide range of training, regular individual supervision sessions, check-in sessions and team meetings.

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 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— 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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, this specifically relates to ensuring that: all leaders and managers follow the home's child protection policies in managing allegations; all staff know what action to take in relation to whistle-blowing procedures; and to ensuring that behaviour support plans are up to date and set out all steps staff should take to manage all known risks.	15 October 2022
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.	15 October 2022

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— 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)) In particular, this specifically relates to ensuring that: leaders and managers demonstrate that they monitor and review behaviour support plans and monitor that staff are consistently following plans set out to safeguard children; and that leaders and managers undertake staff debriefs following serious behaviour incidents for the purposes of service improvement.	
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	15 October 2022

consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— 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))	15 October 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;	15 October 2022

the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii) (c)(iv))	
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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d)) In particular, this refers to the registered person ensuring that: all the recommendations from the fire risk assessor are completed and the building has the appropriate fire safety measures such as fire doors and/or any other measure as required by the assessor, without delay; all repairs to the building are completed in good time, so as to minimise the impact on children living in the home; all damage to the premises is repaired without delay; and	15 October 2022

that children's bedrooms are well maintained, such as ensuring that window coverings and walls are clean, tidy and in good repair.	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff consistently challenge the placing authority to conduct return home interviews. ('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: SC036917

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Royal Borough of Greenwich

Registered provider address: Royal Borough Of Greenwich, The Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington Street, London, Greenwich SE18 6HQ

Responsible individual: Ishara Tewary

Registered manager: Deborah Forde

Inspector

Jayshree Pillay, Social Care Inspector

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