

SC040509

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities. The home is managed by the local authority.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 August 2017

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 6 December 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection

None.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The home consistently provides a high-quality service for young people. Young people benefit from well-planned, highly individualised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to significant change and improvement in their lives.
- Young people enjoy good relationships with staff. They develop and sustain their positive attachments. Staff are positive role models who young people trust, look up to and learn from. Young people make considerable progress across all aspects of their welfare, physical, social, emotional and behavioural development.
- The home maintains effective partnerships with parents, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to ensure that young people enjoy the best possible help and all-round support. Young people are kept safe and enjoy a strong sense of personal safety.
- The safety of young people is consistently at the centre of staff practice, irrespective of the challenges this presents. Risks associated with young people are well known and understood by staff. Staff have an excellent awareness of their specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them.
- Feedback received from young people, their parents, social workers and other professional agencies is consistently and exceptionally positive. Staff consistently have high aspirations for young people. They work proactively and positively with the providers of their education to support their learning, regular attendance, attainment and educational achievement.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Eligible care leavers require relevant plans to promote their readiness for independence.
- Risk impact assessments are not routinely recorded prior to a young person's admission to the home. That said, robust risk assessments are now in place to promote the safety and well-being of young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
05/08/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
23/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that 'relevant plans' are obtained from the placing authority. This relates specifically to ensuring that eligible care leavers have a pathway plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.1)
- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. This relates specifically to ensuring that young people have a risk impact assessment completed prior to their admission. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make significant progress, taking into account their individual starting points across all aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. They benefit from well-planned, highly individualised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives. Young people are kept safe and develop a strong sense of personal safety. Young people report, 'I've been in many care homes and now I'm finally settled. I love this care home and I love the people that work here.'

Young people live in a caring, highly supportive and nurturing environment. They benefit from effective, high-quality support from staff and have stability and consistency in their lives. Relationships between staff and young people are exceptionally positive. Young people enjoy living at the home and develop an appropriate sense of permanence and belonging. Young people report, 'I didn't settle at first but I did eventually settle. I started getting on with staff... The best thing is the support. You have nine staff and they're all caring. There's always a shoulder to cry on and someone to talk to.'

Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and have access to the health services they need, when they need them. This includes access to any specialist support they may require. Staff maintain effective relationships with health professionals to promote young people's good health, physical and emotional well-being. Staff offer sound advice about health issues. Consequently, young people learn to take responsibility for their own health.

A therapist reports, 'The staff here really engage with young people. It's a very warm

and nurturing home. Staff are very professional and are always very welcoming and flexible. The manager, in particular, she's very good and shows real commitment.'

A parent reports, 'It's like a home-from-home experience. I feel a lot more relaxed with him being here. I felt confident that they can meet his needs. I think it's a shame there's not more homes like this one.'

Young people attend school or other alternate educational provision regularly. They enjoy school and are learning and making good progress. The home maintains highly effective partnerships with the providers of young people's education to support their learning, regular attendance and educational achievement. Staff actively encourage young people to have aspirations, training and educational goals. Young people understand and learn the importance of their education and work positively to meet those aspirations, training and educational goals.

Young people are able to influence and make a positive contribution to the running of their home. They are actively involved in decisions, and staff actively listen to young people and act on their reasonable requests. Young people know how to make a complaint and their rights and entitlements are met. Staff promote contact for young people and make sure they sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them. A parent reports, 'They're good on morals and values and (my son) needs those boundaries. This has been a really positive experience. I know he's safe and well looked after. He's integrated well with the other children. It's been brilliant... They've helped him to become more independent. It's nice that they make you feel a part of it. I think it's outstanding the way staff work, which can only come from good leadership.'

Young people take part in a range of community-based activities. They develop friendships, and improve their social skills and self-confidence as a result of these positive experiences. Young people enjoy going to theme parks, the cinema and youth clubs and having holidays with staff. Staff encourage young people's independence and allow them to take appropriate risks to promote their growth and natural development. Young people develop practical skills, such as shopping, cooking and budgeting. The manager has requested a pathway plan for an eligible care leaver to help prepare them for their transition to independence.

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

Staff consistently place the safety and well-being of young people at the centre of their practice, irrespective of the challenges this presents. They have an excellent understanding of their specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to tackle them. Staff make an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of young people. Young people become increasingly safer as a result of the actions staff take to support and protect them.

Risks associated with young people misusing drugs, offending or abusing alcohol are low. These are not behaviours of current concern within the home. Other forms of

unsafe risk-taking behaviours are addressed effectively by staff. The use of risk assessments and proactive, safe working practices promote the safety of young people and reduce the risk of them suffering harm. A therapist reports, 'I am a mental health practitioner who provides consultation, advice and support. I have seen [child's] risk assessments and they're fantastic and her risk management plan is very thorough.'

Staff are well trained in child protection and are familiar with their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They make sure young people are protected from abuse, child exploitation, bullying and all other forms of significant harm. They monitor the movements of young people carefully as they are supervised and supported in accordance with their specific needs. Young people are protected if they are absent or go missing. There is an effective response from staff to locate them and promote their safe and quick return.

There is evidence that the frequency with which young people go missing has reduced considerably. Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with the police, social workers and other safeguarding agencies to promote the safety and well-being of young people.

Staff consistently encourage positive behaviour and make sure negative behaviours are appropriately challenged. Young people learn to understand what behaviours are acceptable and what behaviours won't be tolerated. Staff use restorative practice to help young people improve their relationships and resolve any conflicts positively. Young people learn from their wrongdoing and staff help them to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. Staff consistently implement the home's rules and boundaries effectively and promote tolerance and respect for others. Young people are protected from homophobic behaviour and bullying and all other forms of discrimination.

The use of consequences for negative behaviour are kept to an absolute minimum. Where sanctions are used they are fair and proportionate. Staff manage the behaviours of young people extremely effectively, so much so that there have been no restraints. Staff use de-escalation and diversion strategies effectively to manage challenging incidents, and in doing so they keep young people safe.

Staff employed are selected and vetted carefully, and safe recruitment procedures are strictly adhered to. This prevents unsafe and unsuitable people from being employed and having access to children. Significant incidents and allegations of abuse are quickly shared with the appropriate authorities. This ensures that prompt action is taken by the appropriate agencies to protect young people. Appropriate support is given to the person making the allegation. Additionally, the person who is the subject of the allegation is also supported. Consequently, young people benefit from effective support, help and protection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Young people benefit from a home that is managed efficiently and effectively by a well-qualified, trained, skilled and highly experienced registered manager. The registered

manager demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operation of the home. She leads staff by example, and ensures that all staff are well supported, managed and led. She is inspirational and ambitious in sustaining a high-quality service for young people that delivers the best possible care and support. The manager ensures that the needs of young people are prioritised effectively and there is sustained progress and improvement in their lives. The manager has high expectations of staff and high aspirations for young people to achieve their full potential.

A parent reports, 'The staff give 100% and go above and beyond. They are always there for her, no matter what. If there's a problem, they contact me as soon as possible. They help her to understand the risk she is putting herself in. She likes being there and she is happy with the staff. She's always laughing and joking when I ring her. It's nice to know she feels that way. I do feel they are good for her and can cater for her needs.'

The registered manager and staff are consistently ambitious and energetic about sustaining the home's improvement. They consistently meet the aims and objectives, as set out in the home's statement of purpose, in delivering a high-quality service for young people. They make child-centred decisions and strive to meet the best possible outcomes for young people. They maintain highly effective partnerships with parents, social workers, schools and other professional agencies to help young people and meet their specific needs. A social worker reports, 'The quality of care that has been provided by the home has been outstanding. The staff have a high standard of care and continue to communicate well with all parties involved, which is imperative in coordinating his care.'

The performance of the home is scrutinised effectively. An independent person visits the home on a regular basis to review the standard and quality of young people's care, including the arrangements to safeguard young people and promote their well-being. Reports received by Ofsted are consistently positive. They demonstrate that a high-quality service is provided for young people and their families. The manager makes good use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities. They have an excellent understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and take action to secure improvement.

Staff work collaboratively and enthusiastically as a team to provide consistency and stability in young people's lives. They share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in how they care for young people and have a sense of shared ownership about their practice. There is a positive team spirit and a can-do attitude with staff.

Staff benefit from regular professional supervision and have appraisals of their practice. Their professional development and training needs are identified and met. Staff are extremely well trained, appropriately qualified and skilled to work with vulnerable young people. They understand the plans for young people and actively support their achievement of important milestones. The home can demonstrate the positive difference and impact it has made to the lives of young people and can evidence positive change and improvement in their lives.

The accommodation provided for young people is consistently maintained to a high standard. The home meets the needs of young people and looks like a large family home. Young people's bedrooms are personalised in accordance with their wants and wishes, and they are routinely consulted and involved in choosing the furnishings for the home. The home is a spacious property, which is physically safe, appropriately secure, warm, comfortable and very homely.

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 who 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: SC040509

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 5DA

Responsible individual: Michael Kelly

Registered manager: Vicki Blood

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, social care regulatory 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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