

SC040509

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home. The home is registered to provide care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2023.

Inspection dates: 4 and 5 July 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 31 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/05/2022	Full	Good
23/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build trusting relationships with staff. Staff know and understand the children. One child said the staff are the best thing about living at the home.

When children are new to the home, staff make them feel welcome. However, the admissions process to assess a child's suitability to live in the home is ineffective. This is because the process does not assess children's compatibility. It does not consider individual risks and the impact these may have on other children living in the home. Also, the process fails to consider if staff have the skills and experience needed to meet the child's needs.

Family time is supported in line with relevant plans to meet the individual needs of each child. This ensures that children can maintain relationships that are important to them. Children are given the opportunity to take part in meaningful activities with the staff. However, they often choose not to, preferring to spend their time with their family and friends. The staff respect and support this.

Children are attending school or an appropriate alternative educational provision. One child recently sat their GCSEs and has plans to go to college. The manager and staff work well with schools and social workers. Staff ensure that there is a consistent response to professionals to meet the children's educational needs.

Staff meet children's health and well-being needs. They ensure that children have access to health professionals when needed and to specialist services, such as children's mental health services. Staff also use this specialist support for advice and guidance. This supports staff to identify strategies to help the children.

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

Staff place the safety and well-being of children at the centre of their practice. Children say that if they have a problem they can talk to the staff and staff will listen.

Children understand how to raise a complaint. The manager investigates complaints and responds with sensitivity to children. Throughout this process, children can access advocacy support. This ensures they have an independent person who they can speak to about their concerns.

Staff support children to learn about themselves and the wider world, including topics such as healthy relationships and current affairs. These sessions are proactive but are also delivered in response to new risks that arise. These discussions provide children with an opportunity to explore their feelings and emotions. However, staff have not helped children understand the risks of cannabis use.

Detailed and up-to-date risk assessments give clear guidance to staff. This ensures consistent responses to children's behaviours. Staff understand these documents and put them into practice. However, one child's specific risk was not clearly identified in their plans. The manager addressed this shortfall during the inspection.

When children go missing from the home, staff follow clear and comprehensive plans. The manager and staff work well with external safeguarding professionals, including the police. This ensures well-coordinated responses when children go missing from the home.

When it has been necessary to hold a child, the restraint has been reasonable and proportionate. Records are clear and all relevant professionals are updated. The manager evaluates each incident. Children have an opportunity to talk with staff following an incident. This ensures they understand the reason for the use of restraint. Staff also have the chance to reflect on their practice following an incident.

The manager ensures safer recruitment practice. This means staff are suitable to work with children. But a lack of scrutiny fails to ensure that staff remain suitable throughout their employment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has high expectations for what all children can achieve. The staff are positive about the manager and describe a supportive environment. Staff describe the manager as readily available to provide advice and guidance.

The manager uses internal and external monitoring of the home effectively. She has development plans in place and a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. This enables her to take effective action when required.

The experienced, trained and qualified staff team ensure consistent care practice. However, there are shortfalls in training to meet children's individual needs, including managing asthma, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and the effects of bereavement.

The manager ensures there is a consistent staff team. Agency staff occasionally work in the home, alongside the experienced core staff. This provides consistency of care and ensures that children always have staff who are familiar to them.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervisions. They attend monthly team meetings which provide development opportunities and enable staff to share information.

There are some shortfalls in the home environment. The downstairs area is homely and a nice place for children to spend time. The upper area of the home requires attention, including redecoration, replacing broken window blinds and ensuring timely repair of damage. In addition, staff need to ensure that children's bedrooms are kept clean.

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, The 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 the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(e)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that there is a clear policy which sets out the home's procedures to ensure that staff remain suitable to work with children throughout their employment, following their initial recruitment checks.	3 August 2023
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— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(vii)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that any damage to the home environment is rectified immediately. In addition to this, the registered person must ensure that children's bedrooms are clean.	3 August 2023
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	3 August 2023

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that children’s plans accurately reflect all risks that may impact the individual child. In addition to this, the registered person must ensure that children are supported to understand risk and how to keep themselves safe, in particular, in relation to the use of cannabis.	
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; 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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c))	3 August 2023

Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff have training to meet children's individual needs. In particular, staff must have training in ADHD, bereavement and asthma.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that when assessing each child to the home, they should identify if the staff team have the skills and experience to meet that child's individual, needs prior to the child moving into the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.7)

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: SC040509

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Salford City Council

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

Responsible individual: Sayma Khan

Registered manager: Krista Whaling

Inspectors

Katie Tomlinson, Social Care Inspector
Nicola Forrester, Social Care Inspector

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