

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC040509
Type of inspection	Full
Registered provider	Salford City Council
Registered provider address	Children's Services Unity House Chorley Road Swinton M27 5AW
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Vicki Blood
Inspector	Anthony Kyem

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC040509

Summary of findings

The children's home's provision is outstanding because:

- Young people enjoy living at the home. They are kept safe and have a very strong sense of personal safety. Young people have exceptionally good relationships with staff with whom they sustain their positive attachments. They benefit from continuity of care and have stability and consistency in their lives.
- The home provides young people with a physically safe, appropriately secure, warm, comfortable and homely environment. The accommodation provided for young people is consistently maintained to a high-quality standard for them. Young people are actively involved in the running of the home to encourage their ownership and sense of belonging.
- Staff are exceptionally good role models for young people. Young people benefit from appropriate adults they look up to and learn from. Care planning is extremely well planned and practice is highly individualised to meet the specific needs of the young people. Young people benefit from effective, high-quality support from staff that results in sustained improvement in their lives, across all aspects of their welfare, physical, social, emotional and behavioural development.
- Staff share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in caring for young people. Risks associated with them are well known and understood by staff. Staff have an exceptionally good understanding of the specific needs and vulnerabilities of the young people and take appropriate action to address them.
- Staff proactively promote the development of young people's positive behaviour and manage negative behaviours safely and effectively. Young people become increasingly safer as a result of the actions staff take to support and protect them. They are protected from abuse, bullying, exploitation and all other forms of significant harm.
- Young people benefit from enthusiastic, well-qualified, skilled and highly experienced staff who promote their needs effectively. The registered manager and staff are consistently ambitious and energetic about sustaining a high-quality service for young people that contributes to change and improvement in their lives.
- The home maintains highly effective partnerships with the families of young people, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to meet their specific needs and ensure that they benefit from the best possible help and all round support.

Full report

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, behavioural and/or learning disabilities. The home is owned and managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

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

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Group dynamics have changed since the last inspection. The young person who lived at the home at the time of the last inspection has moved on having made their transition to semi-independent living. The three young people now living at the home have all settled in extremely well and are making considerable progress, taking into account their individual starting points. A letter observed from the young person who has recently left states, 'I really loved living here. It's been an amazing adventure. I love all the staff and you will all be a part of my family. You will always be in my heart and I'll be thinking of you all of the time. Thanks Sonya and John for being there for me, and Vicky, you are like a second mum to me.' Young people benefit from extremely well-planned, highly individualised care that promotes their needs effectively and results in sustained improvement in their lives. They enjoy strong and secure relationships with staff. They benefit from continuity of care and have stability and consistency in their lives. They enjoy living at the home. They are kept safe and develop a very strong sense of personal safety. Staff spend quality time with young people. They work creatively and enthusiastically with their families, social workers, schools and other professional agencies to meet their specific needs and ensure that they benefit from the best possible help and all round support. An independent reviewing officer reports, 'The home supports the young person to remain in education. Proactive in responding to situations and issues. The home is proactive in helping the young person with contact and advocates on their behalf. Young person is able to bring friends back, good liaison with family, good co-working with specialist services.' Young people attend school, college or other alternative educational provision regularly with good support and encouragement from staff. Young people are learning and the home proactively supports their positive educational progress. Staff are consistently ambitious for young people and work closely with the providers of their education to promote their educational achievement. Staff support young people when education becomes difficult and they help them to resolve and overcome those difficulties. They provide any additional support that is needed, such as private home tuition, to ensure that young people benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. One young person who is studying for her A-levels is being provided with additional educational support.	

The home provides young people with any equipment they need to support their learning, such as an area for study and the use of a personal computer. Staff consistently have high aspirations for young people. They support them to pursue their career aspirations, training and educational goals. One young person has aspirations to become a pharmacist and has applied to university. They have also applied for a provisional driving licence to promote their independence and have recently gained part-time employment to promote their economic well-being.

Young people report, 'I really like it. Staff have helped me out a lot and have helped me with college. I like the fact that it's so homely. It's peaceful, homely and it's just nice... I am a college ambassador and help out at any events.'

A teacher reports, 'On the occasions that I have telephoned to speak to the staff they have been very helpful. We share information about our young person in order to support them. This is proving to be successful. For our young person to build trust, they need to know that boundaries and expectations are consistent in both settings and that we communicate to enable this to happen. They seem keen to put boundaries in place, especially focusing on relationships.'

Medical consent is in place and staff are clear about what health decisions and responsibilities are delegated to them. The arrangements for the administration and safe keeping of young people's medication are managed safely and effectively by staff. Young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians and have access to these services when they need them. Additionally, specialist services are sourced for young people, if they need them to promote their physical, emotional and psychological well-being.

Young people are actively encouraged to lead and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Staff actively advise them about key health issues and show them how to make positive lifestyle decisions so they take responsibility for their own health and well-being. A health worker reports, 'I visit the home when I am called upon by staff or young people. I always find the staff most welcoming and accommodating. They all have a good knowledge of the young people in their care and any health needs they may have. Communication between the home and myself is excellent.'

Staff recognise the importance of contact for young people and their families. They maintain effective working relationships with their families and ensure that young people receive the support they need to sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them. Staff provide young people with positive activities both at home and in the wider community. They encourage their positive friendships and support their particular interests and hobbies.

Young people are allowed to take appropriate risks to promote their growth and natural development. Staff promote their independence and young people develop their practical skills in shopping, job hunting, cooking and budgeting. As a result, they develop important life skills that will benefit them in adulthood.

Young people benefit from effective support through one-to-one working and attend regular group meetings with staff. This enables them to influence key decisions and contribute to the running of the home. Staff ensure that their views and reasonable requests are routinely considered and acted upon. Young people know how to make a complaint and their rights are promoted effectively. There have been no complaints since the last inspection.

Young people report: 'It's good because I get my free time and they care for you as much as they possibly can. When I'm upset they always ask if I'm ok. Staff are caring and everyone's there by your side. There's nothing to change, it's fine the way it is. I would give it 10 out of 10 because it's amazing,' and, 'I like it here. It's good. I don't want to stay here for good but if I was told I would have to move somewhere else I would stay here. It's nice, comfortable and homely. The staff are good. I like Vicky the most because she's always really cheerful.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Staff consistently place the safety of young people at the centre of their practice irrespective of the challenges this presents. They have an exceptionally good understanding of their specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them. Risk associated with young people are well known and understood by staff. The use of clear risk assessment and proactive safe working practice promote the safety and well-being of young people. Young people become increasing safer as a result of the actions staff take to support and protect them. Most young people rarely go missing, and those that do benefit from an effective, well-coordinated response to promote their safe return. Staff actively look for young people if they are missing and encourage them to return. An independent reviewing officer reports, 'Staff are proactive in responding to issues in the community. Good liaison with family members. Young person knows importance of keeping in touch with the home. Staff agree to being challenged but do revisit incidents with young people and help them to develop positive strategies to deal with difficulties. Young person prior to placement was regularly self-harming and going missing, plus hospital admissions. All this has reduced due to consistent boundaries and care.' Young people benefit from clear rules and consistent boundaries to encourage and promote their positive behaviour both at the home and when out in the community. Each young person is given a mobile phone to keep in regular contact with the home. They are taught how to keep themselves safe when out in the community and advised about what they should do in unsafe situations. As a	

result, they develop a good awareness of personal safety.

Young people benefit from effective support to self-regulate their own feelings and behaviour. Staff understand how young people's feelings and emotions can sometimes be communicated through their behaviour. This enables them to tackle the behaviours of the young people at source. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted and there is good use of restorative practice, incentives and rewards. The use of sanctions as a consequence for negative behaviour is kept to an absolute minimum. The use of restraint is exceptionally rare, and, if used at all, it is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from harm.

Staff are trained in child protection and know how to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse. They know how to protect young people from abuse and all other forms of significant harm, including child sexual exploitation and the risks associated with social media and the internet. Proactive and highly effective partnerships are maintained with the police, social workers and other safeguarding agencies to promote the safety of young people. Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities to support and protect young people.

Young people benefit from a physically safe, appropriately secure, warm, comfortable and homely environment. Health and safety matters are addressed effectively to maintain a safe environment for young people and staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The home meets and delivers on the aims and objectives, as set out in its statement of purpose. It provides young people and their families with an outstanding quality service that has a positive impact and makes a real difference to their lives. The home benefits from a well-qualified and very experienced registered manager who exercises strong and effective leadership of the operations of the home. The manager stimulates staff's enthusiasm and they channel their efforts effectively. They create a culture of high aspirations for young people. Staff share in and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in caring for young people. Managers and staff are consistently ambitious and energetic about sustaining a high-quality service for young people and their families. They maintain strong and highly effective partnerships with the families of young people, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to meet their specific needs and ensure that they benefit from the best possible help and all round support. Young people's	

needs are prioritised effectively and there is evidence of continuing change and improvement in their lives.

Staff benefit from regular professional practice-related supervision. Their training needs are identified and met effectively. Staff are extremely well trained. They are skilled and suitably qualified, supported effectively and extremely well managed and led. Staff benefit from access to high-quality training that is relevant and appropriate to the work that they routinely perform.

Staff are trained in RESuLT, which was a twelve-week, team-based training programme which draws upon social learning theory. This approach encompasses staff creating a positive living and learning environment for young people that super-focuses on the development of their positive behaviour. Positive behaviour is consistently reinforced. The training has helped staff put theory into practice, brought the team together and developed a 'can do' attitude among the staff team. Staff feel the training has really helped them to stay focused in meeting the specific needs of the young people.

There are fewer sanctions being used and there is improved focus on developing young people's positive behaviour. Staff have a better understanding about adolescent brain development and the effects that previous childhood trauma has on the developing brain. Staff use the skills they have learned from their training to influence young people's behaviours through modelling, repetition, effective communication and relationship skills.

There are effective arrangements for monitoring the performance of the home. An independent person visits the home regularly to review the standard and quality of young people's care and the arrangements to safeguard them and promote their well-being. An evaluative report is produced for the home following each visit. This provides the manager and staff with an impartial judgement about the conduct of the home and is a useful tool in securing improvement. The registered manager has a very good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and makes effective use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to secure improvement.

There were no requirements or recommendations from the last inspection. There are no breaches in regulation at this inspection, so consequently there are no requirements or recommendations.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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