

SC040509

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The current registered manager holds a dual role within the authority.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 26 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2018	Full	Good
01/08/2017	Full	Good
06/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
05/08/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure– (a) that staff– (iv) help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; (vi) maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; (viii) help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8(1), (2)(a)(iv)(vi)(viii))	27/03/2020
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on– (a) mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure– (a) that staff–	27/03/2020

(i) meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; (ii) help each child to develop socially aware behaviour. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c), (2)(a)(i)(ii)) In particular, the home should ensure that children are helped to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and on the safety and well-being of others.	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure– (a) that staff– (i) 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; (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe; (iv) manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1), (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(b))	27/03/2020
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that– (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare.	27/03/2020

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to– (a) 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; (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; (e) ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child; (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(b)(e)(f)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children– (a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and (b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure– (a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home’s statement of purpose. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b), (2)(a))	27/03/2020
The registered person must ensure that all employees– (a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development; (b) receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	27/03/2020
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which–	27/03/2020

(a) include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if– (a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; (b) an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; (d) a child protection enquiry involving a child– (i) is instigated; or (ii) concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or (e) 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))	27/03/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the above principles as set out in 9.35 are respected. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- Regulation 19(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Overall, for most young people, experiences and progress have been limited. Education attendance continues to be irregular. For example, one young person only had 38% attendance in December 2019. Staff work proactively with education providers to try to improve young people's attendance, but have had little impact. A recommendation made at the last inspection has not been met.

Staff encourage young people to attend all their health appointments. On the first day of the inspection, due to staff's perseverance one young person received the necessary immunisations.

Staff request specialist support when necessary to promote young people's physical and emotional well-being. In addition, a mental health practitioner recently attended a team meeting to provide advice on a young person's emotional needs.

A recommendation was made at the last inspection for young people to be assessed as compatible prior to moving into the home. On occasions, young people's behaviour has escalated to the point where they have displayed violent and aggressive behaviour towards staff and caused significant damage to the home. This means that young people have not always lived in a safe, stable and nurturing environment.

Staff have struggled to engage young people in any meaningful, direct, key-work sessions. Furthermore, young people have chosen not to personalise their bedrooms. For one young person, the influence of the other young people living in the home is stronger than that of the staff. While staff offer young people a range of activities, they often prefer to spend time away from the home with their peers. This means that staff do not always know young people's whereabouts or who they are with.

During the inspection, it was not possible to speak to the young people about their experiences of living in the home.

Time with family is promoted and facilitated, and staff send a food parcel with one young person when he visits his family. As a result, young people develop and sustain a sense of identity and belonging. Staff actively support plans for young people to return home, when this is appropriate.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff have not used referral information to inform risks to young people. For example, staff did not share all the information with the mental health practitioner in relation to a young person's emotional well-being. Furthermore, risk assessments are unclear about

the level of risk that some young people present. The manager has identified the shortfalls in risk assessments and has taken some steps to rectify them.

Young people regularly go missing from the home. Staff's attempts to reduce this behaviour have been ineffective. While missing, young people engage in behaviours such as drug misuse and criminal activity, which compromises their welfare and safety. The records show that staff follow the agreed missing-from-home protocols and cooperate with strategy meetings.

The sanctions used have had little effect on changing young people's negative behaviours. On one occasion, a young person commented that their sanction was unfair, yet the managers failed to respond to the young person's comments. This does not ensure that young people feel listened to and that their views are central to the running of the home.

Restraint is rarely used and, when it is, it is appropriate and in order to prevent harm. However, the records do not describe the holds used or the techniques used to de-escalate challenging situations effectively. There have been several instances where the police have been called to the home to help to manage young people's behaviour. This means that some young people have become increasingly involved in the criminal justice system since coming to live at the home.

The manager does not ensure that HMCI is notified of all serious incidents. Consequently, the regulator is prevented from having the necessary oversight over young people's safety and protection.

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

The leadership and management arrangements for the home are weak. As well as managing this home, the registered manager is the service manager for the whole residential service. A new manager has been appointed and submitted an application to be the registered manager. However, they have since stepped down as manager and withdrawn their application to register with Ofsted.

The registered manager acknowledged that staff have lacked the necessary oversight and support to work effectively with the young people. She is aware of the shortfalls and has taken action to address them. The missing paperwork from the placing authority has recently been requested and appropriately escalated, and additional team meetings have been held.

Staff have not received regular supervision. Managers recognise that staff morale has been affected by the management changes. Team development days have been planned yet not taken place. This means that the staff's professional development is not well supported.

At the last inspection, a requirement was made to ensure that the independent person's monitoring reports are sent to Ofsted. This has been met. However, a recommendation

to ensure that staff receive training on the topic of epilepsy and seizures has not been addressed. Furthermore, the recording systems make it difficult to determine the gaps in mandatory training. Staff have not had additional training to meet the needs of the young people living in the home, including social communication difficulties, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and oppositional defiant disorder.

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: 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: Michael Kelly

Registered manager: Vicki Blood

Inspectors

Michelle Bacon: social care inspector

Sylvia Eboigbe: social care inspector

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