

SC059853

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide short break care for up to six children with learning and physical disabilities. A temporary condition was placed on the home to allow care to be provided for children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager was registered in July 2017.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 February 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: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Full	Good
18/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/09/2018	Full	Good
22/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of this inspection, short breaks were being provided for 32 children. There is one child living in the home who is not receiving a short break service.

Children receive high-quality individual care that meets their assessed needs. This means they receive seamless care between their home and short break home. The manager and staff enable children to have positive experiences and they make measurable, evident progress.

Staff have the warmth, skills and confidence to build positive relationships with children. The manager and staff know all the children extremely well. Children feel listened to, and action is taken when they are unhappy.

The staff have excellent relationships with parents of children accessing this home. This means that children have no torn loyalties and are able to settle when having overnight stays. Staff manage concerns sensitively and offer support to families which is often above and beyond their remit. One parent referred to the staff as being like their 'adopted family', which is an indicator of the strength of relationships.

Children are supported to learn and develop their skills. The manager and staff value education and encourage children to achieve their ambitions. Staff encourage and undertake practical activities in the home, such as cooking and cleaning. This has developed children's life skills and equips them for the future.

When children have been out of education, the manager has tenaciously ensured that the correct provision is put in place. As a result, one child was able to sit, and pass, GCSE examinations.

Staff understand and monitor children's individual health needs and emotional well-being. Medication is safely brought, stored and administered to the children, and a clear medication recording system is in place. This means that children continue to receive the correct medication, and mistakes rarely occur.

Behaviour support plans are not in place for children. This means children do not receive a consistent approach when upset.

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

Children are protected from harm in a supportive environment. Staff understand children's vulnerabilities and risks, and each vulnerability and risk is assessed. This means children are kept safe while staying here and are offered tailored care.

Since coming to live at the home, some worrying behaviours for one child have reduced considerably. This is because staff actively and continually assess the possible dangers for each child. They follow up-to-date plans effectively, which reduces the risk of harm to children.

The manager ensures that the staff who work in this home are safe and have formal checks in place. While there are some difficulties in recruiting staff, permanent staff have covered any shortfalls in staffing. Temporary staff are used, and they are subject to the same checks as permanent staff, meaning that the all staff are safe and suitably experienced to work with the children who stay here.

Staff provide children with warmth, and with emotional and clear boundaries that promote positive behaviour. Staff listen to the child's views about the best ways to help them when they are upset or angry. This means that children, when possible, have some say in how they are cared for.

Risk assessments that cover the safe use of the internet are not in place for all children, and staff do not recognise the spectrum of risks, including radicalisation and extremism, posed to children. This means that children are not safe when accessing the internet.

Some staff do not have sufficient detailed knowledge of the home's safeguarding procedure. Some staff do not understand the role of the local authority designated officer or how to make a safeguarding referral.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified. He provides clear and effective leadership and is ambitious for children to be safe and reach their potential. The manager's positive attitude is infectious and means that staff have adopted this approach, which is palpable throughout the staff team. Subsequently, staff morale is high and children stay in a positive environment.

The manager has high expectations for the standard of care and has a detailed understanding of children's progress. The manager acts when children are not getting the right support, which has included making sure that children get the specialist help that they require. As a result, children receive a high level of care and their progress is clearly measured.

The manager makes sure that staff have the right support, training and guidance to provide children with high-quality care. Staff complete relevant training to make sure that they have the necessary skills and knowledge to meet children's complex and additional needs. Reflective learning is encouraged in supervision sessions, which means staff can put their learning into practice.

Staff are enthusiastic, warm and resilient. They enjoy spending time with children and seeing them make progress. Staff share the ethos of the home in providing a positive, nurturing and safe place for children to live in.

Staff have a detailed understanding of each child's needs and plans. They work together as a team to provide children with a high standard of consistent care and support. Monthly staff team meetings are used productively in order to consider children's needs and progress and for staff to share and develop their skills and knowledge.

The arrangements for children's care are carefully planned. Children only come to live at the home once the manager is satisfied that staff can respond effectively to the children's needs. Children are invited to stay with other children with similar interests, which works well. Staff consider well the well-being of the child who lives in this home, and the child is able to join in with activities.

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— 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; and that staff have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(a) (2)(a)(i)(iii)) In particular, this refers to ensuring that the registered person implements risk assessments for children who access the internet. In addition, this refers to the registered person ensuring that staff understand the role of the local authority designated officer and the home's safeguarding procedure.	8 August 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children have behaviour support plans in place. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 47, paragraphs 9.45)

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: SC059853

Registered Provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Victoria Square, PO Box 29, Bolton BL1 1RU

Responsible individual: John Daly

Registered manager: Neil Haydock

Inspectors

Sally Mitchell, Social Care Inspector

Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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