

SC059853

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority's children's home that is registered to provide short breaks for up to six young people who have physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

There is a registered manager in post.

Young people were not spoken to as part of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 June 2019

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

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: 25 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2018	Full	Good
22/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
13/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/12/2016	Full	Outstanding

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 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)(b))	02/09/2019
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; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(d)(e)(h))	02/09/2019

The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1)(4)(b)(c))	02/09/2019
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the use of the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and	02/09/2019

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. Paragraph (3) does not apply in relation to restraint that is planned or provided for as a matter of routine in the child's EHC plan or statement of special educational needs. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b)(2)(3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(4))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	02/09/2019
The registered person must maintain in the home the records in schedule 4; and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37 (2)(a)(b) Schedule 4 (3)) In particular, make sure that copies of staff rosters are accurate and clearly reflect the actual hours worked.	02/09/2019
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. A visit by the independent person to the home may be unannounced. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person's report may recommend actions that	02/09/2019

the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. (Regulation 44 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))	
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Inspection judgements

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

Staff generally have a good knowledge of young people's individual needs. As a result, when young people visit the home staff are ready and prepared to support them. This helps staff to maximise the benefits for each young person's stay.

Despite this, the extent to which young people make progress is not clear. This is because case recording is of variable quality. Consequently, the impact of staff's care is not fully understood. There are missed opportunities for staff to review young people's progress and identify ways to better support them.

Staff take basic steps to encourage young people to contribute to their day-to-day care. For example, in some instances young people are asked what meal or activity they would like. However, consultation with young people is limited and there are missed chances for young people to meaningfully influence the care that they receive.

Young people's visits to the home are fun, lively and varied. Young people benefit from doing lots of activities in the home and out in the community. Examples include trips to the swimming pool and soft-play centres. This gives the young people the opportunity to learn new skills, develop their interests and spend time with each other.

Staff are successful in developing relationships with young people. Staff have a caring approach which means that they support young people to manage their anxieties about being away from home.

Planning for those young people who have not stayed at the home before is appropriate. Staff consider the individual needs of young people, utilising the input from social workers and parents. Tailored transition plans allow staff to overcome any barriers for young people which may prevent them from being able to stay at the home.

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

Risk assessments do not consistently reflect staff's knowledge of young people's vulnerabilities. This means that known information about young people's needs is not always shared between staff. For example, a recent safeguarding incident has highlighted that staff do not have a common understanding about a young person's

ability to accidentally lock doors.

Notwithstanding this, in many cases the risk assessments are detailed and helpful documents which provide staff with clear guidance on how to keep young people safe.

An allegation against a staff member was not investigated in line with the safeguarding procedures in place. Specifically, senior managers were not notified of the allegation in a timely manner. Furthermore, initial actions agreed in response to the allegation were not consistently followed through. This does not demonstrate a strong safeguarding culture.

However, senior managers have recognised these shortfalls, and have taken appropriate steps to try and learn from this incident. This will reduce the likelihood of a similar incident occurring.

Staff's carelessness has recently resulted in a young person being able to access a computer without authorisation. This did not result in any harm to the young person. However, the registered manager has failed to take proactive steps to minimise the chances of this occurring again.

In most cases, staff are successful at promoting young people's positive behaviour and supporting young people to regulate their emotions. This means that physical interventions are not often required. Despite this, behaviour management plans, which are designed to guide staff on how best to look after young people, are not always completed. Although this is a recording issue, it highlights the inconsistent quality of care provided to young people.

The settled behaviour of most young people means that staff rarely sanction young people. However, when sanctions are given there is limited oversight from the registered manager. This means that staff cannot utilise learning from the original incidents to develop the care they provide for young people.

Some young people require a mechanical restraint to keep them safe when being transported in a vehicle. Although the use of such devices appears to be proportionate and appropriate, the registered manager has not appropriately reviewed this practice. This means that chances to reconsider whether this type of restraint is needed are missed.

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

There is an experienced registered manager in post. However, the registered manager presents as frustrated and deflated. This is linked to a current service review being carried out by the provider. The review is causing uncertainty for the registered manager and staff.

This situation is impacting on the registered manager's resilience and motivation. Although the registered manager presents as child-focused, he has not been successful in addressing known shortfalls. This means that young people experience an inconsistent

quality of care.

Although the registered manager has an understanding of some of the areas of improvement, there are limitations regarding his insight into the extent of improvements needed. This was demonstrated by the fact that the registered manager was not able to identify that requirements raised at the last inspection had not been met. For example, the registered manager does not ensure that the staff rosters reflect all shifts worked. In addition, the inconsistent quality of the independent visitor's reports is not supporting the registered manager within his role.

There has been instability in the staffing at the home. This is compounded by the current vacant posts. Because of this, regular staff are required to work extra shifts and additional staff from within the organisation have been working in the home. This means that young people are not always cared for by a consistent, familiar team. This has impacted on the standard of care provided to young people.

Not all staff receive supervision and appraisals in line with the home's statement of purpose. This means that not all staff receive the guidance and support that they need to meet the needs of young people. A short-term plan has been put in place to provide the registered manager with additional capacity to carry out supervisions. Although this has increased the number of supervisions completed recently, this support is time limited.

Staff express mixed views about working in the home. Some staff are positive, and said that they enjoy their work and feel well supported. However, other staff have been affected by the high turnover of staff. It is not clear what impact staff morale has had on the young people.

Staff work hard to develop links with young people's families and any relevant professionals involved in the care being provided to young people. Feedback has highlighted the good communication from staff.

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 differences 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: SC059853

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Bernadette Brown

Registered manager: Neil Haydock

Inspectors

Catherine Fargin, social care inspector

Paul Robinson, social care inspector

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