

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 short break children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who have physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 13 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Children and young people enjoy their short break at the home and they are making exceptionally good progress from their initial starting point.
- Individualised assessments identify the needs of children and young people. The service is highly valued by them, their parents and carers, as well as other professionals.
- Transition planning is individualised and there are detailed plans in place. This ensures that appropriate timescales are considered when children and young people commence their short break stay at the home. Plans take into account the impact that change has on children and young people and how staff will manage and support them.
- Staff know the children and young people extremely well and have high aspirations for them. Staff encourage and support the children and young people to achieve and exceed their individual goals.
- Children and young people are fully involved in making decisions and choices during their short break stay. This gives them autonomy and the confidence to take part in activities which previously they may not have tried.
- Staff effectively communicate with other professionals about the experiences, progress and needs of the children and young people. This level of multi-agency working ensures that children's and young people's health, educational and emotional needs are met.
- Communication with parents and carers is a key strength of the home. One parent commented, 'The staff make sure I am kept informed of any concerns or issues that may arise from the short break my son has had. But equally important is the support provided to the family as a whole. This has enabled us to look at strategies to help him. This joint working has been greatly appreciated and we have seen such progress since he has been attending here.'
- Staff ensure that children and young people are safe when using computers and accessing online websites. The manager has customised online safer training to meet the children's and young people's age and level of understanding.
- Children and young people are involved in the recruitment and selection of staff. Their contribution demonstrates the commitment of the manager and staff to listen to the wishes and views of children and young people in developing the service.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The statement of purpose must be reviewed and a copy provided to Ofsted as required by regulation.
- Missing from home risk assessments should be child specific and amended to reflect any additional identified risks.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/10/2015	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
16: Statement of purpose The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	30/12/2017

Recommendations

- Where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a children's home placement, their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked-after, their care plan (arranged by their placing authority) should include such a strategy. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.24)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people receive highly individualised care and support. Their short break stay at the home is well planned and staff consistently keep the children and young people at the centre of their plans and fully involved in the decision-making process. Transitions into the home are tailored to each child, with some having longer introductory periods than others. This helps them to feel settled, comfortable and makes the experience a positive and fulfilling one for them. One young person said, 'It's great coming here. I get to spend time with my friends. We go out and do lots of things which I enjoy and I really like the staff. They always ask how I am, what I have been doing since I was here last, and spend lots of time with me.'

Staff have an excellent knowledge of the children and young people. Children's and young people's individual communication methods are well supported, enabling them to voice their wishes and views regarding their care and support. This includes choosing the bedroom they like to stay in. As part of the planning for each stay, staff personalise the bedrooms with items the children like or keep at the home. This helps them feel settled from the moment they arrive. Visual prompts, which include pictures on the bedroom doors, pictures of who else is staying in the home each evening and the staff

on duty, provide further information and reassurance for children and young people. Plans for activities are agreed and link in with the overall plans for each child.

Health and education remains the responsibility of children's and young people's parents, carers and guardians. However, the staff continue to provide effective support to meet these individual needs during the short break stay at the home. Staff ensure that transport arrangements are in place for children and young people to continue to attend school. Staff provide detailed handovers to the school staff to explain how each child's and young person's stay at the home has been.

All staff are trained in first aid, and those staff that are responsible for the administration of medication have appropriate training, which is kept updated to reflect current practice and requirements. Robust procedures are in place for the receipt, recording and administering of medication. This means medication is administered as required with effective safeguarding measures in place.

Children and young people access a range of activities during their stay. These include using community leisure facilities for swimming, spending time on an adapted barge on the canal, visiting animal parks and the zoo, as well as museums and going to football matches. Alongside activities outside of the home, staff ensure that a range of sensory and play equipment is available for children and young people to use in the home. The home also has good links with the local community and has had a number of fund-raising activities at the home. Children, parents and carers enjoy taking part in these activities.

Staff have developed strong links with the adult transition team. This means that young people who are preparing for adulthood are supported to access appropriate facilities through direct payments and adult short break services. This help and support helps to prepare young people for leaving the children's service in a positive and informed way. Young people have a memory file that they can take with them when they leave the home. This is a visual reminder of their time at the home and the progress they made.

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

Children and young people say that they feel safe at the home. This is a view held by parents, carers and professionals who spoke with the inspector. There has been one young person who was reported missing for a period of ten minutes. This was due to a fault on the security door. Immediate action was taken to alter the door to minimise this happening again. There is a detailed missing from home policy to follow for any young person missing from the home. However, the risk assessment is not child specific. This has not impacted on the welfare of children and young people and is under review to ensure that all children and young people have individual missing from home risk assessments.

All staff are qualified, experienced and have a clear and detailed knowledge of the needs of all the children and young people. Comprehensive behaviour management strategies are in place and these are reviewed and updated as required. All agreed forms of restraint are recorded in the behaviour management plan and detailed records contain all relevant information if a restraint has been required. The manager monitors all events. This enables an effective analysis and evaluation of practice and helps to

continually review, monitor and improve practice in the home.

The manager ensures that detailed planning and appropriate matching is undertaken for each child and young person prior to their short break visit. This helps to ensure that the groups are positive and engage well with each other. One parent said, 'The planning the manager and staff undertake helps my child to sustain friendships and also makes sure he is safe with the other young people due to his level of vulnerability.' Another parent said, 'I am really confident the placement keeps my child safe. They really understand his particular needs and make sure he is safe and happy during his stay.'

Recruitment of staff is in line with safer recruitment protocols. The staff team is a long-standing and established team. A current staff vacancy is being advertised and a group of young people are involved in the recruitment process. This is a positive experience for young people. The home provides a safe, warm and welcoming environment for children and young people to stay in. Personal evacuation plans are in place to enable the staff to be aware of the individual support required. Regular health, safety and fire safety checks are completed to ensure that staff promote the safety and well-being of everyone in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is experienced and suitably qualified to fulfil his role. He, and the staff, have high aspirations for all children and young people. This is evident through the detailed pre-admission planning and subsequent stays for each child and young person. Staff are committed to their role and seek to continually improve and excel the outcomes for all children and young people. Other professionals, along with parents and carers, speak exceptionally highly of the service provided at the home, along with the skills, experience and dedication of the staff team. Young people also share this view. One young person said, 'This place is the best place I have ever stayed. I love coming here. I am able to try lots of different things and I am really excited about being able to meet and interview for a new member of staff.'

All staff receive regular supervision. This enables them to discuss and reflect on their practice, as well as identify any additional training and development needs. Annual appraisals include the views of young people and how they feel each staff member supports them. This demonstrates the commitment of the manager and staff in involving children and young people in all aspects of their care and support.

Staff complete mandatory training within agreed timescales. All staff hold relevant qualifications at level 3 or above. They further develop their skills by accessing further training. An example of this includes 10 staff holding higher level safeguarding qualifications. Further training in online safety awareness has enabled the staff to raise the awareness of children and young people in an accessible and individualised way.

The home's statement of purpose has been updated in April 2017. However, a copy of this document has not been sent to Ofsted as required by regulation. Parents have confirmed that they have received this document and it is available in the home, along with the children's guide. The children's guide is in an accessible format and enables the young people to have an understanding about what to expect during their short break.

Children and young people have excellent relationships with staff and this is evident through observation of interactions along with comments made by professionals, parents and carers. Staff will challenge, on behalf of young people, where there is a shortfall in services or support. This means staff are continually assessing the needs of young people. Detailed children's records are maintained which reflect the current needs, progress and future support. This helps the manager, other agencies and parents to reflect on progress made and future goals. One parent said, 'I did not think that my child would have progressed so well, but he has. The staff work not only with the children, but provide really good support to parents to help us think of different ways to help our children.'

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

Responsible individual: Sarah Gatenby

Registered manager: Neil Haydock

Inspector

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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