

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 registered with Ofsted in July 2007.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 January 2024

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2023	Full	Good
22/02/2022	Full	Good
18/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Twenty-six children attend this home for short breaks. One child who was living at the home has left, following a successful and well-planned move. Children's introductions to the home are planned in a way that is sensitive to their needs and they do not stay until they feel ready to stay overnight.

Children's stays are well planned by the staff. Staff consider friendships, individual needs and children's preferences. Many children have sensory bags filled with their favourite things to support them during their stay. Children's bedrooms are personalised for them ahead of their arrival.

The home is a large bungalow, which is clean and nicely presented. The manager is aware of any shortfalls in the environment and takes steps to address these. The garden is well resourced with toys, books, games and equipment for the children to play with. However, these are often locked away, which impacts children's ability to readily choose and explore.

The home has a separate sensory room, including different light systems, where children enjoy spending time. The home is spacious and has a large bathroom. However, this room is accessible by three doors. The manager has not assessed how this bathroom can be used safely to ensure that children's privacy is not affected.

Children enjoy a huge range of activities outside of the home. These include swimming, bowling and going to the cinema, football matches and fairgrounds. Children are also encouraged to build their independence skills during their stays. These achievements are celebrated through certificate displays in the home and photos, which are positive reminders for the children.

The staff work closely with families. One parent said, 'The staff go above and beyond.' For example, staff support children at special family events, and staff also attend medical appointments with children and their families to provide additional support.

Some children have complex needs, including epilepsy. There is monitoring in place for these children at night-time. This includes audiovisual monitoring and door alarms. However, the use of these systems is not assessed on an individual basis or monitored and reviewed. This means that children's right to privacy is not always considered.

Children's individual communication methods are understood by staff and children are encouraged to give feedback on their experiences of their short breaks. However, children are not consulted following restraints.. This is a missed opportunity for staff to be creative in obtaining children's views, wishes and feelings after they have been held.

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

Children's individual risks are understood by the staff and plans are individualised based on need. For example, a lot of work has been carried out with children who use the internet to ensure that they are safe online.

Children are encouraged to take age-appropriate risks and staff enable the children to achieve. Staff have a good understanding of children's individual risks and these are managed well.

There has been one allegation made by a child. This was managed appropriately and the manager ensured that information was shared with other professionals. Additionally, staff are aware of the home's child protection policies.

The staff team works closely with families and other agencies when there are concerns around a child. They are creative in how they support children to ensure that they can continue with their visits. This has included children being supported by a core team during their stays, or reducing the number of children that they visit with. Such strategies have been successful and this ensures that children and families can continue to receive support.

Incidents of restraint are rare. However, the manager failed to identify two restraints that two restraints had not been recorded in full as per regulation. This means that the manager has not been able to assess whether the holds were appropriate.

Staff take responsibility for a lot of medication administration during children's stays. There has been one medication error since the previous inspection. This was managed appropriately by the manager. However, staff did not obtain medical advice regarding the error. Additionally, staff did not obtain medical advice when a child had displayed self-injurious behaviour.

There are several children who have turned 18. The manager is proactive in pushing for transition support and to ensure that plans are in place for children before they become adults. The manager is an active advocate in ensuring that children and their families have accurate advice and support.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is registered to manage two of the local authority's homes and has been registered since 2007. He is supported by two experienced senior staff who are able to assist him in the day-to-day running of the home when he is not present.

Staff receive regular supervisions and appraisal. They have the necessary training to support the children who visit effectively. The manager holds regular team meetings, where children's needs are discussed. Other professionals attend to deliver training and the manager discusses any practice concerns he has. This supports staff in their roles. However, the manager does not have a workforce development plan in place.

The manager has thorough oversight that helps him plan effectively and address any shortfalls. He is always looking for ways to improve his oversight. The manager has clear and current development plans in place for the home and has recently submitted his ideas to his line manager for consideration.

The manager works closely with other professionals and is able to draw on different professionals who work in the local authority, for the benefit of the children and their families. This support is well received by families and has included coffee mornings where families can get together and be signposted to services they may not have known were available to them.

The manager is a good advocate for the children and leads a team of committed and motivated staff. The manager ensures that safer recruitment processes are followed, which means that only staff deemed safe to work with the children are doing so.

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, The 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 registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) This relates specifically to ensuring that children have individual plans around the use of audiovisual monitoring, including door alarms; that these plans are regularly reviewed; and that any monitoring of children is the least restrictive option and provides them with as much privacy as possible. This further relates to the locking of cupboards and doors being assessed and reviewed on an individual basis to ensure that children can access areas of the home freely if it is safe for them to do so. This also relates to assessing the use of the bathroom that has three separate entrances so that children can use this safely and their privacy is maintained.	8 March 2024
The registered person must ensure that—	8 March 2024

within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation 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 need to use 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

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.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

This relates specifically to the registered person ensuring that any restraint used is appropriately recorded.

This further relates to ensuring that, after the use of a restraint, children are supported to reflect in a way that is useful for them, based on their individual communication needs.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that they have a workforce plan that can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that medical advice is sought if medication is administered incorrectly and after a child has self-harmed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.20)

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

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: Paul Rankin

Registered manager: Neil Haydock

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024