

SC063683

Manchester City Council Local Authority

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority-run home that accommodates up to six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 7 September 2017

This monitoring visit

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 11 July 2017. As a result, Ofsted issued a compliance notice under regulation 14 regarding the care planning standard. This was due to delays in local authority care planning which were leading to placement drift. Children were living at the home when this was clearly not in their best interests. Consequently, children's safety and welfare were compromised.

The focus of this visit was to monitor the actions taken by the provider to comply with the regulation 14 notice.

The local authority has drawn up an action plan for improvement and has taken sufficient steps to address and meet the compliance notice. The senior leadership team has been fully involved in promoting improvement and has maintained effective scrutiny of practice. Robust action has been taken to promote better and more timely care planning. This has involved weekly governance meetings that have addressed delays in care planning by ensuring that professionals responsible for children's placements are held accountable. The provider has reviewed current practice in the wider authority and addressed shortfalls in placement planning systems. Consequently, three children have moved on to new placements following well-planned introductions.

Moving forward, plans are in place for each child to have a care planning meeting every six weeks and for partner agencies to be involved, as well as local authority

partners. Better arrangements have been set up for partnership working so that children have access to a range of other professionals within the home. This is likely to result in more effective care and placement planning, which address children's needs faster and more effectively.

Improvements have been made to the referrals process, and all new referrals are to be presented via the centralised placements team and considered at a matching and linking meeting, which the social worker is expected to attend. A compatibility risk assessment is to be drawn up in collaboration with the social worker so that the registered manager can make an informed decision about the suitability of the placement for the child, taking into account the needs of children already in placement.

As yet, no compatibility risk assessments have been drawn up because no children have been admitted to the home. This has been a deliberate strategy, as the local authority is taking steps to address a number of shortfalls at the home prior to admitting more children. A review of the current risk management documentation has taken place and the provider recognises that the document is too long-winded and needs improvement. Managers want the document to be more succinct, to incorporate the 'signs of safety' approach and to follow on from referral information in a more streamlined and smarter way and to fully reflect the children looked after care plans. The home anticipates introducing the new document by the end of September 2017 and prior to the future admission of any child.

Children's placement plans demonstrate how their needs are to be addressed at the home. They are usually, but not always, updated each month. The standard remains variable in that placement plans do not always reflect changes to the child's care plan. This is a weakness in recording. For example, where a new placement has been agreed for a child and introductions have been set up and executed prior to the child's discharge, this is not always recorded on the child's placement plan. Consequently, the document does not fully demonstrate how the home is supporting a child and meeting their needs, including how it is supporting introductions to a new placement. The manager plans to address this issue and to ensure better and more timely recording.

Three children have moved on to new placements appropriately as a result of improved management and oversight of care planning by the senior leadership team. The children have had planned introductions and have been well supported and consulted prior to the move. The home is undergoing refurbishment and staff are undertaking refresher and new training in key practice areas. This is in preparation for the admission of new children.

The home has met the compliance notice in respect of regulation 14.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2017	Full	Inadequate
02/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Good
30/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC063683

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Manchester City Council Local Authority

Registered provider address: Manchester City Council, PO Box 532, Manchester M60 2LA

Responsible individual: Amanda Amesbury

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Sharon Lloyd, social care regulatory inspector

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