

SC063683

Registered provider: Manchester City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is run and managed by a local authority.

A new manager registered with Ofsted on 15 March 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 August 2018

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: 16 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/10/2017	Full	Good
11/07/2017	Full	Inadequate
02/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— (a) the quality of care provided for children; (b) the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and (c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (3) After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). (4) The registered person must— (a) supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and (b) make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home. (5) The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b) and (5))	28/09/2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (2) When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person— (a) if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the	28/09/2018

independent person requires; and (b) 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. (Regulation 44(1) (2) (a) (b))	
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Recommendations

- Ensure that children are in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)
- Sufficient staff means a home having enough suitably trained staff (including someone in a management role) on duty to meet the assessed needs of all children in the home. The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted, including ensuring that the employment of any temporary staff will not prevent children from receiving the continuity of care that they need. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1) This relates specifically to the recruitment of sufficient numbers of well-qualified, trained and experienced staff.
- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care or protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals etc. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23) This relates specifically to consulting with any relevant stakeholders as part of the home's quality of care review.
- As well as longer-term support for children to move on from the home effectively (regulation 6(2)(b)(vi)), the home has an important role in supporting each child leaving the home in the period immediately before their departure. The registered person should work with the placing authority to ensure that each child's transition is planned and help each child to prepare for leaving both practically and emotionally. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Some young people make good progress, taking into account their individual starting points across most aspects of their physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. Young people that attend school regularly are learning and making good

progress. However, not all young people attend school on a regular basis despite support and encouragement from staff. Consequently, mixed outcomes in education are evident.

Staff continue to support young people when school becomes difficult. They encourage their education and work proactively with the schools of young people to improve school attendance and to promote young people's educational achievements. A staff member reports, '[The manager] is an amazing advocate for the children. She ensures that they receive the correct education and will chase professionals to make sure they are also doing their job.'

Relevant plans are in place and care planning is individually tailored to meet the specific needs of the young people. Young people benefit from well-planned, highly personalised care that promotes their needs effectively and contributes to change and improvement in their lives. A social worker reported, 'I am happy with my young person being there. The staff are amazing, and she says that she enjoys being there. They're very supportive of her. The manager and staff are very approachable.'

Staff work closely with the families of young people and promote regular contact taking place. As result, young people sustain their close relationships with the people who are most important to them. Staff supervise contact where restrictions are in place. This ensures that contact is a positive and safe experience for young people.

Young people's individual interests and hobbies are actively supported and encouraged. The home provides them with a diverse range of activities and supports them to enjoy life and have fun. Young people enjoy positive activities, such as horse riding, gymnastics, fishing, camping, music concerts and attending other special events. Young people reported, 'It's alright. I like it. It does have its off days. The staff are nice, and they take us out on activities. They ask us what's wrong if you're upset. I can talk to staff every now and then. It's a nice house with kind staff.'

Young people benefit from a physically safe, warm, comfortable and homely environment. The accommodation provided for young people is consistently maintained to a very high standard. A police sergeant reported:

The times I have visited the premises I have always found the home to be a habitable and clean environment. The premises do not appear clinical like previous homes I have seen and attended but emanates a very natural home feel. This must be positive for the well-being of the young residents and sets the foundation fundamentally for the quality of care that the staff provide.

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

Young people are kept safe and most feel safe living at the home. However, there have been some issues with bullying, which staff have managed and dealt with effectively. As a result, young people feel safeguarded and protected. Staff remain vigilant towards incidents of bullying. They help young people to understand the types of behaviour that are unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Young people know how to make a complaint and complaints raised by young people are addressed effectively. The home has received two external complaints in relation to noise levels and anti-social behaviour. Apologies were issued to those affected.

The home has restricted young people's access to the rear garden area at night times to address the potential for noise levels and anti-social behaviour. The number of staff working night shifts has also been increased to manage young people's behaviours more effectively. The placing authority is also actively looking to find one young person whose needs the home is no longer able to meet a suitable therapeutic placement. This is due to the young person becoming a risk to themselves and others. This young person will be supported by staff to leave the home in a planned, controlled and positive way. A social worker reported, 'I can say that although she is making it very difficult for staff to keep her safe currently, and she is putting herself and others at risk, staff clearly care and are trying to keep her safe, putting in every safety measure and incentive to try and engage with her.'

Staff have a good understanding of young people's specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them. Young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Significant incidents are reported to the appropriate authorities by staff to ensure that young people are protected and kept safe from harm. Allegations of abuse are managed professionally. The home maintains effective partnerships with the police and all other safeguarding agencies to promote the safety and well-being of young people.

The behaviours of young people are managed safely and effectively by staff. Restraint is always a last resort that is only ever used to prevent young people suffering harm. Sanctions used to address unacceptable behaviours are fair and proportionate when used. Staff implement the home's rules and boundaries consistently to promote a safe environment for young people.

Not all young people go missing, and those that do benefit from an effective response to promote their safe return. The home works closely with the police and has subscribed to a new police initiative to reduce the frequency with which young people go missing. A project worker from The Children's Society reported, 'We complete the return home interviews for all of the young people in Manchester. We also do one-to-one work with the young people... I think the home's good. From what I've seen, they're really good with her.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new registered manager has been in place since March 2018, who demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operation of the home. The manager is suitably experienced and well qualified.

Currently, there are insufficient numbers of permanent staff employed. That said, several experienced agency workers are employed on a long-standing contractual basis to

ensure that young people's needs are being met. The same agency staff are used to provide young people with continuity of care. This ensures that young people's attachments are not unduly disrupted.

Staff benefit from regular supervision of their practice and are well managed, supported and professionally led. The manager has consistently high expectations of staff and high aspirations for young people. The manager stimulates staff's enthusiasm and channels their efforts effectively. She maintains highly effective partnerships with other professionals and ensures that young people benefit from the best possible help and wraparound support.

The home meets the aims and objectives, as set out in its statement of purpose. The home has met and addressed the three recommendations from the last inspection. The home employs an independent person to scrutinise the performance of the home and its arrangements to safeguard young people and promote their safety and well-being. However, consents are outstanding for this person to access young people's confidential case records in keeping with regulation.

The registered manager now completes a risk impact assessment to ensure that young people placed are appropriately matched. The home no longer accepts any emergency admissions. There is now at least a three-week settling-in period for new admissions before any future placements at the home are even considered. Allegations of abuse are now more clearly recorded to demonstrate that child protection procedures are stringently followed and adhered to.

The registered manager has completed a detailed, insightful and informative quality of care review. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She makes effective use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to secure the home's continuing development and improvement. However, the most recent six-monthly review had not been submitted to Ofsted within timescales. Additionally, the review does not include the views of young people or relevant stakeholders to enable them to contribute to and influence the services that the home provides.

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: SC063683

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester M60 2LA

Responsible individual: Sean McKendrick

Registered manager: Christine Smith

Inspector

Anthony Kyem, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

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