

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 owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to six children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, four children were living at the home. All children spoke to the inspectors about their experiences of living there.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 to 16 October 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 26 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2024	Full	Good
05/09/2023	Full	Good
01/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Significant shortfalls in the safeguarding practices and leadership and management of the home have negatively impacted on the safety and well-being of children. Children's experiences of living at the home are poor, and children's progress is limited. Children do not have a sense of belonging to the home and say that they are unhappy living there. One child described living at the home as, 'just surviving'.

The quality of relationships between staff and children is poor. Staff do not make efforts to engage with children or to spend quality time with them. Staff have limited interest in the well-being and progress of the children in their care. All four children said that there were no staff members who they would confide in. This means that children do not feel listened to, nurtured, loved or respected.

Children are not provided with structure or routines and spend a lot of time out of the home. Although staff have sometimes offered children opportunities to take part in activities, if children decline, little effort is made to encourage them to engage. Children's interests are rarely supported or nurtured.

Most of the children do not attend school regularly. Staff are often unclear about the children's day-to-day routines, and they make limited efforts to instil structure into the children's lives or to provide loving, warm and nurturing care.

Children's health needs are not always met. A GP appointment has not been made for a child who does not take their prescribed medication regularly. Opportunities to talk to children about their sexual health are missed. Staff do not always encourage children to engage with specialist agencies, such as drug and alcohol services and mental health services.

Children live in a large home. However, it requires attention to be welcoming and homely. The design of internal doors, flooring and signage throughout contributes to an institutional style. Two of the children's bedrooms do not have window coverings, which has a negative effect on the quality of their sleep. Two children said they had seen mice in the home; staff blamed a child for the state of their bedroom and personal hygiene for the presence of the mice. The manager has addressed some areas of the home that need replacement or repair. However, there are often delays to fixing and maintaining the property.

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

Significant shortfalls in safeguarding practices have led to some children being placed at risk of harm. The manager and staff are unaware of some of the current risks that the children in their care are exposed to and they tend to minimise the severity of these risks. One child said, 'Staff don't help me.'

Children's risk management plans are not individualised. They do not identify all the known risks and do not include clear strategies for staff to follow to keep children safe.

Staff do not always know children's whereabouts, and attempts to find them are limited. The number of incidents of children going missing from home is significantly high. Instructions about what action staff need to take if children go missing are not clear, and not all episodes of children going missing from home are recorded.

Expectations, rules and boundaries used by staff lack consistency and are often punitive. Consequences are not always clearly explained to children or clearly recorded. Staff sometimes rely on police intervention or the threat of police intervention to manage children's behaviour.

Staff do not help children to talk about topics that are relevant to them. One child, who has access to a mobile phone, is not helped to stay safe online. Staff have no systems in place to monitor what children are accessing online. Children are not helped to manage or understand their emotions or behaviours.

Children's achievements are rarely celebrated, and the language used in children's records is often uncaring and blames the child.

Serious incidents involving children have not always been notified to Ofsted as required by regulation. This reduces the regulator's oversight of practice at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager is experienced and suitably qualified. Two assistant managers are in post to help support her. The management team's ability to identify the home's areas of vulnerability is limited. This impedes the improvement and development of practice within the home.

Some staff have worked at the home for some time. However, there is a high number of staff who are not permanent members of the team. One child said, 'New staff come in and out of the home all the time.' This means children do not receive consistent care from staff who know them well.

Staff attend regular team meetings and say they feel supported by the manager. However, not all staff, including the manager, have received regular individual supervision sessions. This means that staff have not always had the opportunity to discuss or reflect on their practice at regular intervals. This does not support staff to improve the quality of care provided to children.

Staff are provided with training opportunities. However, not all staff have received training in areas that are relevant to the needs of the children in their care. This has

negatively impacted on staff's ability to build trusted relationships with children and on their ability to safeguard them adequately.

Managers and leaders do not always investigate fully when an allegation is made. On one occasion, a child was not spoken to following an allegation that had affected them. This was a missed opportunity to find out the child's views, wishes and feelings and for the manager to take action to improve practice at the home.

The statement of purpose has been updated recently, but it has not been sent to Ofsted for some time. This limits Ofsted's oversight of changes to the home.

Monitoring and oversight by leaders and managers are limited and ineffective. The lack of management oversight and professional curiosity when incidents, room searches and key-work sessions occur means that opportunities to make improvements and identify any learning to improve practice have been missed.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship; strive to gain each child's respect and trust;	30 November 2025

de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(xi)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff spend time with children, develop meaningful relationships with them, and provide nurturing, loving and respectful care. In addition, ensure that staff communicate expectations about children's behaviour clearly and consistently, and that these are accurately recorded, and police intervention is used as a last resort.	
*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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that each child's risk plan contains all their known risks, and the level and extent of each risk is clear, and that information about what action staff should take if a risk arises is clear, effective and meets the needs of the child. In addition, ensure that missing-from-home protocols are clear and consistent and that staff follow children's missing-from-home protocols and they are vigilant and curious about each child's whereabouts. Ensure that the home looks like a family home.	30 November 2025
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—	30 November 2025

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 staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f)(g)(i)(ii)(h))	
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c))	30 November 2025
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;	30 November 2025

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that staff are provided with suitable training to fully understand and meet the needs of each child living in the home. All staff, including the registered manager must receive supervision sessions.	30 November 2025
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iii))	30 November 2025
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 the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	30 November 2025

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC063683

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Manchester City Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall Extension, Manchester M2 5DB

Responsible individual: Sean McKendrick

Registered manager: Esther Smith

Inspectors

Zillah Brooks, Social Care Inspector
Justina Henry, Social Care Inspector

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