

SC063683

Manchester City Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is run and managed by a local authority. The manager of the home was registered with Ofsted in March 2018.

Inspection date: 24 February 2021

This monitoring visit

The purpose of the off-site visit was to look at concerns raised in a point-in-time survey by staff, about the team's ability to take appropriate action to safeguard young people who go missing from home. A young person living in the home also shared their views in a survey in relation to certain aspects of their care that they were unhappy with.

The inspector has looked at all the concerns raised in the surveys, by speaking with children, staff and social workers. There is no evidence to substantiate the concerns raised by staff. Young people's wishes and feelings about their care have been acknowledged and suitable action taken, which demonstrates that young people's concerns are taken seriously.

There is a high level of missing from home for some young people in the home. The staff team works consistently with other professionals, such as social workers and the complex safeguarding team, to regularly review young people's risk assessments. In addition to this, the senior team attends regular missing-from-home panel meetings, to assess and agree preventative strategies to support young people to reduce missing-from-home incidents.

Staff understand and follow agreed missing-from-home protocols, including any legal orders that are in place to keep young people safe. Most risk assessments and behaviour management plans are clear about the action staff should take to safeguard young people who go missing from home. For example, staff follow young

people to ensure their safety and try to deter them from getting on public transport if they are attempting to go missing. However, the manager should ensure that all young people's risk plans include timescales for reporting young people when they do not return home at an agreed time.

The staff team works proactively to try to educate young people on how to make better choices and stay safe. Daily chats and direct work with young people demonstrate that young people can talk openly and honestly with staff. Detailed sessions address key risk factors for young people, such as missing from home, vulnerability and exploitation.

Social workers reported, 'The staff team couldn't do any more to safeguard young people who go missing from home. Staff understand risks for young people and are proactive in trying to deter them from going missing from home.' Social workers said that the staff team provides a high level of communication. Staff liaise regularly with families and allocated police officers to try to engage young people to work with safety plans.

Overall, young people said that they have good relationships with staff. Young people trust staff with their personal information and understand when staff should share their information with other professionals. Young people feel listened to and told the inspector that when they have raised concerns the manager has taken action to resolve any issues and come to an agreed compromise.

Staff help young people to access agencies to support their mental health. Young people are encouraged to engage regularly with professionals from the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS), local counselling services and substance misuse agencies. Staff know how to respond to young people who are at risk of self-harm. Staff encourage young people to identify strategies to prevent them from harming themselves.

The manager's oversight of missing-from-home records is not always robust. Some records do not include evidence of the action that staff have taken to prevent, locate and return young people who go missing from home. The manager should also ensure that the records accurately reflect the time when staff start their call to the police, to evidence that there has been no delay in reporting young people missing from home.

There are not always enough staff on duty to meet young people's needs. For example, when a young person requires a higher staff ratio while being transported in a vehicle, there have not always been staff on shift to implement this immediately. As a result, there have been delays in picking young people up from missing-from-home incidents, or young people have used public transport and taxis to return home. This potentially compromises young people's safety.

Staff reported that they always feel supported by the manager, including during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. Staff receive regular practice-related supervisions

and attend regular team meetings to keep them up to date with changes to young people's plans.

Agency staff are used regularly in the home to cover long-term vacancies and staff sickness. The manager ensures that consistent agency staff are used to ensure continuity of care for the young people. Staff told the inspector that the agency staff feel like part of the staff team and contribute valuable experience.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2019	Full	Good
14/08/2018	Full	Good
16/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/10/2017	Full	Good

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(d)(h)) Specifically, the manager should ensure that missing-from-home records clearly identify the action that staff have taken to prevent, locate and return young people who go missing from home. The manager should ensure that all young people's risk assessments include timescales that staff should follow for reporting young people missing from home. The manager should ensure that there are always enough staff on shift to meet young people's needs and keep them safe.	8 April 2021

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

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

Responsible individual: Sean McKendrick

Registered manager: Esther Smith

Inspector

Cheryl Field, Social Care Inspector

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