

SC066010

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to four children who may experience social or emotional difficulties. Since the last inspection, four children have lived at the home. On the day of the inspection, one child was in residence.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 July 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be 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: 20 April 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/04/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
28/07/2021	Full	Good
08/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/02/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children develop trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the children and invest time listening to them and promoting their welfare. These trusting relationships continue after the children leave the home. Notably, the children view the manager as a highly positive influence in their lives.

Three children have left the home in an unplanned way because their progress and outcomes have been limited. However, most children have made individual progress and value their time living at the home. One child said, 'The rules were good, fair, staff definitely cared about you.' Another said, 'I felt like I could trust staff. They understood everyone and helped us when we felt down and angry. They treated us like their own.'

Staff talk with children about the matters that affect them the most. This includes topics such as coping with difficult relationships and understanding diversity. Staff help children to understand their care plans and regularly repeat these conversations to help children feel cared for. The relationships staff forge with the children help to facilitate these important conversations.

Staff celebrate the children's achievements. They foster the children's self-esteem by promoting positive encouragement in areas where they may struggle, such as education.

Children attend their health appointments. Specialist health services and the in-house clinician provide ongoing support for children's emotional well-being. A support plan developed through a clinical assessment about a child's needs helped the child to develop strategies to better recognise their emotions and healthier ways to cope with their feelings.

Staff quickly build relationships with children when they move to the home. A child who recently moved to the home said, 'Best thing about being here so far is the staff. They are really nice.'

A plethora of enjoyable activities helps children to have fun. This includes children going on holiday with staff. Children are also helped to maintain important relationships with their friends to reduce the impact that living away from their hometown can have.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. They experience care and help that are sensitive and responsive to their needs. Staff listen to the children's wishes and feelings and support them with their choices as they shape their individual identity. This helps children to feel listened to and valued.

Children have variable outcomes with their education. The manager and staff hold the importance of education in high regard, which has helped some children to maintain their educational progress. However, for other children, staff's encouragement and support have not been effective in helping them to go to school.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children identify trusted members of staff they can talk to. They say that staff listen to them and take their concerns seriously. However, staff have not been effective in helping all the children to feel safe living together. There is an absence of restorative practice and bringing children together to find a way to live harmoniously. This resulted in one child leaving the home because they did not feel safe.

Another child was brought back into the home by a passing police officer after they left the home at night, without the staff knowing they had gone. This incident was scrutinised by the manager and appropriate actions were taken in response to the staff member's shortfall in practice.

Staff follow missing-from-home protocols and escalate their concerns to the police when necessary. Staff look for children when they are missing, to promote a safe return home. Through these actions, staff have reduced the risks for children when they have stayed away from the home for longer lengths of time. However, there are gaps in children having a return home interview with an independent person. This does not allow children to share their concerns should they need to.

Physical intervention is not common practice. When incidents do occur, staff prioritise the children's safety. Detailed behaviour support plans include the children's views on how they like to be helped when dealing with difficult emotions. This approach enhances staff's effectiveness.

There are gaps in the manager's practice regarding notifying Ofsted when serious incidents have occurred in the home. This does not allow the regulator to have oversight of the manager's actions and if they keep children safe.

Concerns about staff practice are well managed and follow the local safeguarding procedures. The manager's consultation with the local authority designated officer demonstrates a thorough process. However, a risk assessment to manage personal relationships in work has not been consistently followed. This prevents senior management from acting when a conflict of interest may impact on the way children are cared for.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced and qualified manager provides strong leadership and guidance to the team. He models his skills of developing safe and secure relationships with children.

Good oversight of staff's practice helps the manager to monitor the quality of care effectively for children. The manager understands the team's strengths and has a development plan to address any weaknesses.

Team meetings are child focused and help staff to plan how to meet the children's needs and reflect on the challenges the role can bring. A positive team culture helps them to focus on achieving the best outcomes for children. Gaps in the frequency of team meetings are minimised by the quality of the manager's scrutiny and the guidance he provides to the staff team.

Staff feel well supported in their roles. One staff member described their support as 'amazing'. Practice-related supervision provides an open and transparent forum where the manager evaluates staff performance and offers guidance.

The manager is a strong advocate for children. He provided appropriate challenge to a school when a child was not receiving the quality of education they are entitled to. This helps to ensure that children have their rights upheld.

A programme of refurbishment is helping to improve the quality of the environment. However, some minor repairs and cleaning routines have been overlooked. The television in the lounge is wall mounted behind a wooden case to prevent damage. This does not make it feel homely and detracts from the progress being made to improve the quality of the environment. This institutional type of practice has not been kept under review to assess whether it remains necessary.

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 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— help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iv)(xi)(xiii)(b)) The registered person must ensure that: children are helped to resolve conflict with one another through restorative practice; they develop a culture that helps children to communicate and live harmoniously with one another.	24 September 2023
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—	24 September 2023

that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vii)) The registered person must ensure that staff are aware when children leave the home and that children have independent return home interviews after being missing from home. When this does not occur, the registered person must escalate their concern with responsible local authority to ensure that children have an independent return home interview.	
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; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(c))	24 September 2023

Recommendations

- The registered person should continually review whether additional measures to protect the environment are necessary. This specifically relates to the television cabinet. The registered person should ensure that the environment is homely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that the family and friends relationship risk assessment is reviewed to ensure that it keeps children safe and that the steps to manage relationships are stringently adhered to. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.4)
- The registered person should review the day-to-day monitoring systems for the home to ensure that repairs to the building are not missed and all areas of the home are cleaned effectively. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.23)

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: SC066010

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Registered provider address: Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

Responsible individual: Anthony Nolan

Registered manager: Robert Sharp

Inspector

Aaron Mcloughlin, 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 looked after children, 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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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 2023