

SC066651

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short-breaks service is owned and managed by a local authority and provides care for up to six children who may have learning and/or physical disabilities.

Currently, no children are receiving a short-breaks service. A variation is in place to allow one child to live at the home until suitable and permanent accommodation is found.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2019.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 February 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 26 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/03/2019	Full	Outstanding
03/10/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the time of this inspection, one child was living at the home. One child made a positive transition to their new home five months after their 18th birthday. The staff team remain committed to supporting the remaining child to move to suitable adult accommodation as they are close to their 18th birthday. At the time of the inspection, nowhere had been found by the local authority. The child's ability to achieve their full potential in a permanent home is being impeded significantly by this delay.

Managers and staff know the child's personality and show empathy towards the child and their uncertain future. Several of the staff have developed positive relationships with the child and they have gained the child's trust. Managers and staff listen to the child's views and involve them in their daily plans. They advocate for the child's best interests.

Staff support the child to engage with their home education. The child participates in the subjects, and they are performing well in some subjects. The child's choice of leisure interests is limited to being taken for drives out, listening to music, writing and having relaxing foot massages.

Staff ensure that children are registered with local health services. They support the child to engage with their routine health appointments. The staff work collaboratively with primary and specialist healthcare providers to meet the child's complex mental health and physical health needs. Two medication errors that happened in close succession were treated as safeguarding concerns. In this case, the child's health was not seriously compromised, and remedial action has been taken to avoid a further incident.

Professionals from the specialist child mental health team have developed scripted responses to help staff to relay consistent responses to the child. This method of communication supports the child to feel less anxious. Small goals are set to enable the child to achieve, no matter how small. This includes the child developing independence skills, such as deciding what to eat, participating in their personal care and dressing themselves.

Stakeholder's express satisfaction with the quality of care provided by the staff team.

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

Staff understand the importance of promoting the children's safety and welfare. They know how to whistle-blow and share any concerns about poor staff

performance. Allegations against staff are investigated and the measures that are taken protect the child's vulnerabilities.

The child's risky behaviours are identified, understood and managed effectively by managers and staff who understand the child's complex needs and risks. The written risk assessments are comprehensive. They are kept under regular review in response to the child's changing needs. The risk assessments provide detailed information about the potential risks and include the strategies to reduce the risk of harm to the child and other people. However, it is not clear how the risks are evaluated to determine if or how they are reducing.

A high number of incidents involving physical interventions have been experienced by one child since the last full inspection. On three occasions last summer, the police were contacted to assist the staff to manage the child's dysregulated behaviour. During one incident, the police used a method of restraint on the child that was not permitted at this home. The manager discussed the issue with the police, placing an alert on the police files to make other officers aware of the child's needs. However, the manager failed to check whether the alert had been implemented by the police. Due to the remedial action taken by managers and health professionals following the incident, no further incidents have required police intervention. Without an agreed protocol, there can be no guarantee that a similar incident will not happen again, which could expose the child to further distress and potential harm.

As a result of improved incident records, managers have a better understanding of incidents following physical interventions. However, a lack of analysis of the patterns and trends surrounding the incidents prevent managers from having a clear oversight to confirm what is working well and what needs to change.

Staff recruitment files were missing some key documents, which meant that the suitability of new staff could not be evaluated. This also limits the registered manager from having a good oversight of the staff recruitment checks, which are held by the human resources department. The registered manager is currently reviewing the existing agency staff member's' personnel files that have been sent by the recruitment agency. This is helping the manager to satisfy herself that the documents comply with the regulations.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Leaders and managers continue to support and motivate the staff team while overseeing the care of children for an extended period outside of the short-break remit. The staff team has demonstrated resilience and commitment to caring for children despite the challenges that have been outside of their usual expertise.

Staff rate the management support and guidance highly and feel that their suggestions are listened to. Improved daily communication between staff from the home and the agency staff has resulted in a shared understanding of their roles and responsibilities. New staff have filled vacancies and improved the group dynamic.

However, the revised statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted to reflect the changes.

The visits by the independent person and internal monitoring systems support the registered manager to understand the strengths of the service and respond to most gaps. The six-monthly review report has been improved to incorporate feedback from professionals, family members and children. However, consultations with the staff team are not included in the report. This aspect of the requirement is repeated. Furthermore, the action plan does not include timescales to help the registered manager to focus on the improvement areas in a timely way. There is no workforce development plan for the home.

Staff confirm that they receive regular supervision. However, the quality of the supervision records is not consistently good and there is little evidence of reflective discussions.

Training supports the staff's practice. The team meetings keep the staff up to date with the children's progress and the operation of the home. However, reminders from managers have been ineffective in persuading staff to read and sign the documents consistently.

Managers have not carried out a formal debrief with the staff team following a course of events that led to a staff member leaving. This does not allow the team to reflect on the matters and consider their learning and practice.

The requirements relating to the poor-quality flooring and damaged bath panel have been addressed. A redecoration programme is under way in preparation for the service when it returns to delivering short breaks in the future.

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 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. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to the registered person demonstrating how the risks are continually evaluated to determine if/how they are reducing. The registered person should confirm with the police that the alert for one child has been implemented.	10 March 2023
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) This specifically relates to the registered provider ensuring that staff sign the team meeting minutes to confirm that they have read and understood them.	10 March 2023

The registered person must: ■ analyse the patterns and trends surrounding incidents to confirm what is working well and what needs to change ■ conduct a formal debrief with the staff team following the issues arising from the staff member leaving the home ■ confirm that all of the recruitment checks for agency staff have been signed off as suitable and ensure that all staff recruitment information is made available for inspection.	
The registered person must— notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b))	10 March 2023
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This specifically relates to the registered provider ensuring that staff have reflective supervision and that the supervision records are of consistently good quality.	10 March 2023
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (2)(c)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the action plan includes timescales.	10 March 2023
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 (5)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the review of the quality of care report includes feedback from staff. This requirement was made at the last inspection and is restated.	10 March 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that there is a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirement of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: SC066651

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual: Sally Williams

Registered manager: Julie Wiseman

Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, 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 children looked after, 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