

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 young person who has reached 18 years old to live at the home until they move to suitable accommodation.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since June 2019.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 6 February 2023

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
06/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/03/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

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

The shortfalls in the safe recruitment practice of agency workers remain an unresolved issue. This has resulted in a limited outcome on the overall judgement for this home.

The young person who was living at the home at the time of the last inspection is now 18 years old. Since moving to the home over two years ago, they have experienced stability. The plan for the young person to move to suitable adult accommodation is underway. Regular meetings between managers and other agencies and professionals ensure that the young person benefits from having a well-planned and positive experience of leaving the home.

The young person treats the home as their safe haven. Their room remains sparse, and the area has experienced some wear and tear. A refurbishment programme is ongoing.

Managers continue to act as strong advocates for the young person. This ensures that the young person's wishes and feelings are shared and acted on as appropriate. The staff use scripted responses when communicating with the young person, which support consistent responses and help the young person to feel less anxious.

The staff have sustained positive and trusting relationships with the young person. Staff know the young person well. They understand the young person's personality and traits, which helps the staff to meet the young person's individual needs. This has helped the young person to make progress. The young person is engaging in key-work sessions with staff and show that they can meet small, yet achievable, goals.

Staff prepare and support the young person to engage in their health appointments. When appointments have been missed, the staff ensure that another appointment is made. They collaborate with specialist healthcare providers and ensure that the young person's needs are met. This includes changes to the young person's medication to help them to feel more settled.

The young person has re-engaged in some home tuition twice a week. Having the same tutor has helped the young person to resume with their learning and continue to show talent in mathematics. Staff support the young person to participate in activities, such as going out for drives, sensory activities, and writing letters.

Professionals express satisfaction with the care practices and positive communication from the service.

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

There continue to be shortfalls in the provider's recruitment checks of agency staff. Many of the agency staff have worked at the home for over two years, but the registered manager has not been able to confirm their suitability through carrying out their own due diligence. For example, the Disclosure and Barring Service checks, references, and the right to work clearances have not all been received for all of the agency staff. The recruitment of new staff does not consistently show the reasons for them leaving their last employment. In the absence of this information, and a suitable written risk assessment in relation to the agency staff, the safety of children and young people cannot be assured adequately.

The young person's risks are clearly identified in their written risk assessments. The risks are understood by the staff, and they are managed well. Consistent routines and boundaries have led to a reduction in significant incidents, which may have previously led to the young person becoming dysregulated. Professionals do not raise any concerns about the young person's safety and welfare.

High staff supervision levels and vigilance help to keep the young person safe. However, there is no written missing-from-home protocol should they go missing.

Staff have not needed to hold the young person for over two months. This is a huge reduction given the high number of incidents and police involvement that was needed in previous months. Improvements in the management oversight of the physical interventions means that they are now evaluated as safe and proportionate.

The fire door leading to the back garden has not been checked to ensure that it can operate effectively in the event of a fire.

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

Managers have attempted to request recruitment documents for all agency staff, but this was not followed up and escalated in a timely way. Some permanent staff have been recruited and vacancies are being addressed.

The agency staff who work regularly at the home do not receive practice-related supervision. This does not provide them with the opportunities to have reflective discussions and receive bespoke guidance and support, neither does it provide managers with assurances about their practice or the opportunity to discuss any concerns.

Until very recently, the registered manager was not having supervision. This only began very recently when the new senior manager started in post. Similarly, some permanent staff have missed out on having regular supervision. The review of a staff member's probation does not address their practice in relation to reflection or

the care of children. This does not help managers to determine the rationale for staff passing their probation.

The registered manager has not completed the relevant management qualification since they came into post over three years ago, in order to support them in their role. Some refresher training for staff, such as food safety and autism awareness, has not been completed for a while to ensure that the staff team's knowledge remains current.

External monitoring of the home is completed by a new independent visitor. They have reviewed the care practices in the home and consider the young person to be safeguarded effectively and their well-being promoted.

Most of the previous requirements are met. The unmet requirements relate to managers conducting a formal debrief with the staff team around the departure of a staff member and the recruitment issues. These are repeated.

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; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(i)(b)) Specifically, the registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission, and how staff should support the child on return to the home.	31 July 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— 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;	31 July 2023

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)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that they conduct a formal debrief with the staff team following the issues arising from the staff member leaving the home. This requirement is repeated from the last inspection.	
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that the fire door leading to the back garden is checked to ensure that it can operate effectively in the event of a fire.	31 July 2023
For the purposes of paragraph (1)(b)(i), a person has the appropriate experience and qualification if the person has— by the relevant date, attained— the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 5 Diploma”); or a qualification which the registered provider considers to be equivalent to the Level 5 Diploma. (Regulation 28 (2)(c)(i)(ii))	31 July 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children’s home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that—	31 July 2023

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(d)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory recruitment checks are completed in relation to agency staff to satisfy themselves that they are safe to care for children.	
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 all staff receive up-to-date training in line with refresher training. The registered person must ensure that all staff, including the registered manager, permanent and agency staff, receive practice-related supervision at regular intervals. The registered person must ensure that the minutes of the probationary reviews are practice-related, reflective and support their care for children and young people.	31 July 2023

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 address: Sheffield City Council, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual: Sally Williams

Registered manager: Julie Wiseman

Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, Social Care Inspector

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