

SC066651

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2019.

Inspection date: 27 February 2024

Date of last inspection: 26 June 2023

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

The inspector has looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

Since the last inspection, the young person living at the home has moved on to their new home. Staff and managers worked hard to ensure that the young person had a well-planned move that alleviated their anxieties as much as possible. As a result, the young person had a positive experience of leaving the home.

The home has had extensive work completed in preparation of short breaks restarting. In particular, children's bedrooms and the bathrooms have been significantly improved. They are tastefully decorated in child-friendly themes, creating a home from home for children. There are plans to improve other areas of the home and the garden this year. There were no concerns relating to the use of fire doors at this inspection.

Staff and managers held open days for children and their families so that they could visit the home and meet the staff and other children and families. Children are also visiting for tea before their overnight stays begin, and some children have started staying overnight. Managers and staff are slowly introducing children to the home to make sure that they are comfortable and that all children enjoy their stays. A child visiting the home was visibly comfortable with the staff and the environment. The staff record children's achievements and progress. This includes how children are involved in their care and in learning how to look after themselves. Feedback from parents and professionals is positive, and talks about good communication and welcoming staff.

Staff are taking the time to understand the needs of the children and how to support them to keep themselves and others safe. They comfort children when they are upset and support them with managing their feelings and emotions. Staff try to prevent incidents, and stop them quickly when this is not effective. They rarely use physical holds. When incidents happen, managers review incidents and identify good practice and lessons learned. The lessons learned lead to changes so that the risk of future incidents is reduced. There are now clear protocols in place in the event of children going missing from the home.

The home is led by an experienced manager who is highly committed and dedicated and has a clear vision for the home and the care of children. The manager is still working on completing the appropriate qualification. The relevant date for its completion has passed, so the requirement is reissued. The morale of the staff team is improving, and the staff are enjoying providing short breaks to children again. Staff now receive regular and reflective supervision. However, the documents used to track supervision are not always completed, which limits the ability to maintain oversight.

Staff have not completed all the training needed to keep children and others safe. The document used to track staff training is not reviewed regularly and kept up to date. The manager has addressed a concern that arose when a member of staff left the home. This meets an action from the last inspection.

The use of agency staff has been significantly reduced. Agency staff are working in ancillary roles only and there is ongoing recruitment to fill remaining vacancies. The processes to make sure that safer recruitment checks are completed have improved. However, there are gaps in staff's employment history. This leaves uncertainty about whether they are suitable to work in the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/10/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, 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
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. The relevant date is— in the case of a person who starts managing a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 3 years after the date on which that person started managing a home; or in the case of a person who was managing a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2017. The registered provider may defer the relevant date if the person— does not manage, or has not managed, a home for a prolonged period; or manages, or has managed, a home on a part-time basis. (Regulation 28 (2)(c)(i)(ii))	30 April 2024
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	31 March 2024

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— 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 all to satisfy themselves that they are safe to care for children.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)) Specifically, the registered person must ensure that all staff receive up-to-date training in line with refresher training.	30 April 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that documents that provide oversight of staff supervision are completed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

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

Honor Hamshaw, Social Care Inspector

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