

SC394283

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to five children who may experience emotional and behavioural difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living in the home. All children spoke to the inspector about their experiences of living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2024.

The registered provider has recently appointed a new responsible individual, and we are currently checking this person has the relevant capacity, experience and skills to carry out the role.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 December 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 June 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/06/2024	Full	Good
10/05/2023	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Good
07/02/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living in this home are supported by experienced and knowledgeable staff and make exceptional progress in all areas of their lives. Children who have moved out of the home have all experienced a positive and planned move. Their time in the home has equipped them with new skills and clear aspirations for their futures. Children who have moved into the home have all been welcomed with thought and kindness by staff who consistently provide warm and nurturing care.

Children share close, trusting relationships with staff and accept their help, support and guidance. Staff listen to children and encourage them to share their views and experiences. They empower children to respectfully challenge adults and have their voices heard if they disagree with decisions made on their behalf. For one child, this involved speaking to a local councillor directly to challenge a decision made by their placing authority in respect of their care planning.

Children's educational achievements are the highest priority for staff. All children are supported to make and maintain progress in their learning. Children are included and involved in their education plans and, where needed, bespoke programmes of education are created to ensure that children have the best possible support to achieve. One parent said: 'My child is now talking about apprenticeships or going to college, it's the first time I've heard them talk about their future.'

Staff invest in children's health and wellbeing, ensuring that children have the right support at the right time. Staff encourage and support children to engage with a variety of services and work closely with health professionals to support a consistent and informed approach for children. When appropriate, staff enable children to take responsibility for their own medication, in line with their age and understanding.

Staff support children to maintain positive relationships with their families. Staff understand the importance of familial relationships to ensure children have a strong sense of identity. Staff build trust with families and develop inclusive relationships that enhance children's experience of living in the home. One parent said: '[The staff] have been the best thing that has happened to my child and family in a long time. They have kept me involved, are thoughtful, kind and really care about [name of child]. They have made loads of changes for the better, and the manager is like a force to be reckoned with.'

Staff immerse themselves in children's lives, hobbies and interests. Children are encouraged to invite their friends to the home and enjoy sleepovers. Staff get to know children's peers and ensure the home is a welcoming environment for them to visit. Children regularly take part in a variety of activities and enjoy taking mini breaks with staff.

Staff provide extensive support for children to develop their independence, creating their own 'passport to independence', teaching children to learn basic home maintenance skills, cooking, budgeting and taking personal responsibility. Where appropriate, children are responsible for their own key and can spend time alone in the home in preparation for living independently. Staff excel in preparing children for moving on and maintain contact with several children who have since left the home. One former resident said: 'Living there was fantastic, they helped me so much and I still come round for a brew. I love them, they are my English family.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Staff understand children's risks well and consistently support children to understand their own risks, vulnerabilities and how to keep safe. Staff knowledge is underpinned by extensive research that is used to inform and develop risk assessments and approaches to behaviour support for children. As a result, children's risks have steadily reduced over time.

Children's input is valued when considering their individual themes for targeted and direct work. Children therefore regularly complete direct work with staff in a way that is meaningful and helpful to them. Staff help children to learn from their mistakes and as a result children learn to make better, safer and healthier choices.

Staff provide empathetic yet firm and consistent boundaries which support children's routines and structure in the home. Children say that they feel safe in the home and that they feel well cared and loved by staff. One child said: 'Everyone here is wicked, they've really helped me with my mental health and to feel more confident.'

Missing-from-home incidents have significantly reduced, indicating that children share a sense of belonging and safety in the home. When missing-from-home incidents do occur, there is a swift and appropriate response from staff. Staff know where children are likely to be and continuously look for children until they are safely home. Staff then work with children to explore the push-and-pull factors which may lead to missing incidents and work with them to promote safer time spent in the community and at home. Return home interviews are always provided, and staff work effectively with wider agencies to gain a better understanding of children's peer groups and any concerns in the community which may impact children.

Incidents requiring physical intervention are rare, with only one occurring since the last inspection. This was proportionate to keep the child safe, and the child was supported effectively to share their views following this intervention. Other significant incidents are well managed, and staff successfully use de-escalation skills to support children when they are frustrated or upset. Consequently, significant incidents consistently reduce for individual children over time.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by an experienced and knowledgeable manager who is tenacious and fearless in her support and advocacy for children. One child said: 'She is like my guardian angel, no matter what I do she will always protect me and try to get me to do the right thing.' Staff say that they are extremely well supported, and several staff say that she is the best manager they have ever had. All children named the manager as someone that they trust and feel safe with. She is an ever-present figurehead in the home and leads by example.

The manager puts the children at the centre of all decision-making and is unafraid to challenge senior leaders where necessary. This has inspired the staff team around her to feel confident when challenging professionals where appropriate and in the best interests of the children. All staff are secure in providing strong advocacy for children and ensure that their voices are clearly heard by all professionals involved.

The manager empowers staff to take responsibility for developing their own and their colleagues' learning. Research themes that are relevant to children's needs or risks are shared among the team and team meetings are used as an opportunity for staff to present and share their findings. Staff then work together to develop their practice and approach from a more informed position and to support their direct work with children.

Supervision sessions are always reflective, child focused and practice related. Staff use supervision for support in respect of their own wellbeing and to consider how they can better support children. Any areas for development are swiftly addressed with staff and good practice is modelled and shared throughout the staff team.

The manager has developed a culture in the home that is open, welcoming, kind and inspiring. Every practice-related element in the home is open for development. Staff are encouraged to always think about progress for children, and the impact on children is at the forefront of every they do. Staff are encouraged to think creatively when supporting children and the ethos of the home is that 'nobody gives up'.

The manager has well-established, thorough systems in place to provide in-depth oversight and understanding of the home. All incidents are swiftly reviewed. All senior staff members have a delegated area of responsibility in the home, which the manager oversees, and any areas for development are quickly addressed and appraised. These systems ensure there is a cohesive, harmonious approach from staff which underpins the outstanding care that children receive.

No requirements or recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

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: SC394283

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 5AW

Responsible individual:

Registered manager: Elizabeth Dahou

Inspector

Justina Henry, Social Care Inspector

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