

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	01/11/2016
Unique reference number	1237582
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Rochdale MBC
Registered provider address	Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council Number One Riverside Rochdale OL16 1XU
Responsible Individual	Meg Boustead
Registered Manager	Wayne Gates
Inspector	Louise Redfern

Inspection date	01/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

1237582

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people benefit from being cared for by a staff team that provides individualised care, when accessing the short-break service.
- Young people are placed at the centre of the service. Activities and experiences are in place to ensure that young people enjoy the time spent at the service.
- Young people and their families receive effective support that helps them to improve their relationships and stay together.
- Young people's safety and welfare are prioritised in the home. Young people say that they feel safe in the home. This is because of the staff team and the care that they receive.
- Excellent relationships are developed with parents and professionals, which provide young people with a holistic support package.
- Individual team members say that they are very well supported in their roles. They say that the manager is always available for support and leads by example. They benefit from regular supervisions and team meetings and participate in regular training. This ensures that they are well equipped to meet the individual needs of the young people who access the service.
- The four shortfalls identified at the inspection have not significantly impacted on the welfare and safety of young people.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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 independent person must produce a report which sets out the opinion of the independent person on whether the children are effectively safeguarded. (Regulation 44 (4)(b))	31/12/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The missing from home return interview should be carried out within 72 hours of the child returning to their home or care setting. This should be an in-depth interview and is normally best carried out by an independent person who is trained to carry out these interviews and is able to follow-up any actions that emerge. (Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care, page 14, paragraph 32)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. The risk assessment must include the details of the steps that the home will take to manage any assessed risks. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- Appraisals should take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home owned and run by a local authority. The home provides short-break accommodation for young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The service has two main functions. The first is to provide short-term intensive outreach work within the community. The second is to provide short-break care. The home can accommodate up to five young people. Currently, the short-break service is provided to six young people.

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>The overall aim of this service is to strengthen family relationships in order to prevent young people from becoming looked after. The short-breaks service is just one aspect of a range of support packages available to families. Families who access this service have been identified by the local authority as requiring extra support. Staff also provide outreach work to young people and their families within their own home. These interventions have been successful in enabling young people to continue to live with their parents and have prevented the majority of them from becoming looked after. One parent commented, 'They helped me getting the incentives right. My son wants me to say good things to the worker. It's really helped having someone to talk to. There's less stress at home now we get on better.' The short-break service is offered to those young people who would benefit from time away from the family home on a regular basis, until the family work has been completed.</p> <p>Young people benefit from a consistent staff team. This means that they know the staff who work with them when they are staying over. Staff build trusting and effective working relationships with both young people and their family members. A young person said, 'I think the staff are good. I wouldn't change anything. It's 10 out of 10.'</p> <p>An individual programme of overnight stays and family outreach support is identified as part of the planning of placements. However, this arrangement is fluid and can be adapted to ensure that the young people's needs are being met. For example, for one young person, there has been a very slow introduction to the service, with them spending time at the home before staying overnight. This is being managed at a pace which effectively supports the young person to engage and feel safe being at the service and away from the family home.</p> <p>The manager and staff team ensure that young people have a clear say about their individual programme and about the short-break service. Young people participate in regular meetings to share their views and put forward suggestions for activities. The manager encourages feedback from young people, parents and professionals to improve the service and ensure that the views of young people are clearly heard.</p> <p>Given that the service provides short breaks, the responsibility for young people's health and educational needs remains with their parents or carers. However, individual key workers do support parents and young people to ensure that young people's individual health and educational needs are being addressed. The manager and staff team work with educational professionals to ensure that the short breaks do not disrupt attendance at school. Staff will attend meetings as</p>	

required by parents and/or placing social workers, which promotes a holistic approach to meeting the individual needs of young people.

Young people enjoy short breaks in a house that is well resourced to ensure that they enjoy the time that they spend there. There is a pool table, board games, two lounges with games consoles and a computer linked to the internet. The staff team has a strong focus on providing a relaxing environment for young people to enjoy when on a short break. One young person said, 'I like that it's calm and quiet. I can relax here. I like having the time away from family stresses.' The staff team also arranges community activities, such as the cinema and trips to the local fayre. The plan of activities supports the engagement of young people and provides opportunities for them to enjoy their time at the provision. Each bedroom is individually decorated and well maintained. Young people have the opportunity to choose which room they wish to stay in. One young person commented, 'I get to choose my room. I like the London room. I am fussy where I sleep, but the staff know this and help me.'

Young people's individual goals and targets are identified in their plans. Young people are encouraged and supported to develop new skills and interests during their stay. The staff team ensures that young people feel comfortable in the house and that they can make drinks, snacks and meals themselves and use the laundry facilities. This supports young people to feel relaxed in the home and develops their life skills. One professional commented, 'Initially X was resistant to the short-break service, but the staff were brilliant with him on his first visit and he really enjoys his break. He is really relaxed when he is here.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>The young people who access this service are provided with a safe and secure environment. A view shared by professionals, parents and young people. One young person commented, 'I definitely feel safe when I am here.' Parents are confident that the staff team has the skills and knowledge to keep their children safe when spending time at the home.</p> <p>The managers and staff team spend time gathering information prior to young people staying over at the provision. This ensures that the staff team has detailed knowledge around the individual young people's needs and has agreed strategies in place to support and manage individual young people. The manager is well aware of the presenting risks of each young person, consequently young people accessing the short-break service are safely matched with their peers.</p> <p>Young people who access the short-break provision rarely go missing from the service. However, some young people who access the service in a block stay do occasionally go missing. Risk management plans are in place for each young person to support staff to manage any risk-taking behaviour. However, some risk</p>	

assessments do not have detailed strategies in place to support staff to consistently manage these episodes. Despite this shortfall, records show that staff are proactive and work tirelessly to support the young person to return home. One young person commented, 'They always phone me and try to see where I am. That's because they [the staff team] care about me.' The manager has yet to ensure that a system is in place to check that young people have received an independent return home interview when they return from going missing. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that young people are safe and to help identify if any other support could be put in place to safeguard the young person.

While accessing the service, young people demonstrate a reduction in risk-taking behaviour. This is because they say, 'I enjoy the calmness of here. I like the quiet and the staff team.' Young people benefit from being supported by a staff team that offers consistency and routines. This means that young people know what to expect during their time at the service and helps them to manage their behaviour and to develop a sense of well-being and security.

Individual staff members have an excellent awareness of safeguarding. They have access to a number of training courses, which underpins their knowledge and understanding.

Behaviour is well managed by the staff team. This is because the staff team is well trained and is particularly skilled at building sound relationships with young people. The manager and staff team are able to identify any subtle changes in the behaviour of the young people, which ensures that the right level of support is quickly identified and put in place. The staff team effectively communicates with parents when young people return home from their short break.

The manager is committed to providing a safe environment. He ensures that regular health and safety checks are completed in the home. Young people continue to be protected by robust staff recruitment and selection procedures, in which the manager takes an active role. Appropriate checks and monitoring of visitors to the home help to protect young people from unsuitable adults in the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>This is the first inspection for this newly registered service. The manager and staff team had previously provided this service from a different location. The manager has a number of years' experience and provides consistent leadership and management of the service. The manager has responsibility for both the residential provision which offers short breaks to young people and the outreach service which provides extra support to both young people and their families to prevent family breakdown.</p>	

The manager has a good oversight and awareness of the issues relating to both young people and their families. This ensures that young people are placed at the centre of the provision. However, the manager has recently resigned his position. The organisation has commenced the recruitment process to ensure that continuity of leadership in the home is maintained.

Staff say that they are effectively supported in their role. They benefit from regular team meetings, detailed supervision sessions and handovers which act as a debriefing on the day's events. This enables staff to have a good understanding of the current issues and which young people are accessing the short-break service. The manager has completed individual appraisals for each team member. However, these do not take into account the views of young people, families or professionals. This is a missed opportunity to undertake a more holistic review of professional practice and would assist the manager in identifying development needs within the team.

The manager ensures that the statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and that the aims and objectives are being achieved. The manager has a number of monitoring systems in place. This ensures that he has a good oversight of the service and can evidence the impact that the service is having on the lives of young people. The internal monitoring systems clearly identify areas for development, which the manager details in the development plan. External monitoring is regular and reports are detailed. However, the visitor does not comment on whether young people are being effectively safeguarded.

The manager and staff team develop excellent relationships with young people, parents, the placing social worker and external agencies. This means that young people benefit from a holistic support package which strives to ensure that they are safe, make progress and have access to the right levels of support. One parent commented, 'It's a very good service. The staff listen to me. They have been a wonderful support to me and my family.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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