

# SC059842

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a local authority short-break children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have physical and/or learning disabilities.

**Inspection dates:** 19 to 20 December 2017

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
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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:** 20 March 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people have exceptionally positive experiences during their short-break stay in the home. This enables them to make significant progress in their development and overall outcomes.
- Staff are skilled at providing individualised, nurturing care, which is underpinned by a working knowledge of attachment theory. As a result, young people feel truly valued and this supports young people to make progress.
- Staff know the young people very well and have excellent relationships with them. This contributes to the young people's overall care and experiences.
- Transition to the service is exceptionally well planned. The young person's needs remain central to the transition plan, ensuring that their introduction to the home is highly individualised. This contributes to their positive experiences while receiving a short-break stay.
- Young people are safe in this home due to highly effective planning. This means that young people can access a range of activities to widen their experiences in a way that keeps them and other young people safe.
- Staff work in partnership effectively with other professionals and parents to provide high-quality holistic care and support to the young people.
- Parents are highly complimentary about the service that their children receive. They recognise the progress that their children make, including their social skills and increased confidence.
- An established, experienced staff team provides continuity of care and support to the young people

The children's home's areas for development:

- The established staff team consists of female staff. Consideration should be given to support being provided to children by staff from the different gender groups.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
11/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/09/2015	Full	Outstanding

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

### Recommendations

- Whenever possible, staff in day to day contact with children should include staff from different gender groups. Where the home's statement of purpose makes it explicit that the home uses staff of one sex only, clear guidance will need to be in place and followed as to how children are enabled to maintain relationships with people of a different gender. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.22)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive individualised care and support from an established staff team. Staff are very experienced. They demonstrate a strong passion and commitment to supporting disabled children and young people to have the opportunities and experiences that enable them to make significant progress in all areas of their development. One young person said, 'I love coming here. I have made lots of friends and there is always something happening here which I can take part in. The staff are kind and help me loads, I am so happy I spend time here.' Responses to the regulator's surveys indicated that parents, education staff, social workers and independent reviewing officers all have high regard for the services provided by staff. One parent said, 'Staff make sure my child is well cared for, safe and happy. The care my child receives is of a consistently high standard. She communicates her excitement and enjoyment about her stay at the home and, as a parent, I find that very reassuring.'

Young people's complex healthcare needs are met effectively during their stay, by staff who have had the necessary training to underpin their care practice. A paediatric registered nurse provides this training. The training is updated on a regular basis to ensure that all practice is current and meets the individual needs of each young person. Robust systems are in place for the storage, administration and recording of medication. This further supports the health and welfare of young people during their stay at the home.

Staff successfully promote the educational needs of young people. Although education remains the overall responsibility of parents and carers, staff link in with schools to ensure that there is consistent communication in relation to the young people. One teacher said, 'The staff are excellent at working with education staff to ensure the continuity for the young people. The staff ensure that they pass on relevant information about each young person, enabling continuity in the care and support provided. The staff demonstrate their knowledge of each young person very well and, in my experience, young people thoroughly enjoy their stays at the home and parents are

confident that their children are receiving care of a very high standard.'

The range of communication methods that the staff are able to use means that all the young people are provided with an opportunity to have their views listened to. Young people are clearly at the centre of their plan and they have a say about the care and support they receive and require. The manager completes detailed impact assessments to ensure that all young people enjoy a positive experience during their stay. Care plans are comprehensive and reflect the individuality of the young person well. Staff review and update plans on a regular basis to ensure that they remain current and contain all relevant details. The plans in place also demonstrate the progress that young people make during their short-break stay at the home.

Staff make sure that the home is warm and welcoming. Staff are enthusiastic for the young people to engage in a range of opportunities and experiences that reflect their individual interests. This includes taking part in activities within both the home and the local community. Examples of activities include baking, cooking, crafts, using computers and the use of the sensory garden. One social worker said, 'The opportunities provided to [name of young person] have enabled her to progress significantly in communication skills, independence skills and develop friendships through sharing experiences within the home with other young people. The staff do not see disability as a barrier that cannot be overcome. They are resourceful in enabling disabled children to have opportunities which enhance their learning and development in a relaxed and enjoyable way.'

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

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for each young person. Staff clearly understand and manage risks in a safe way. This contributes to the overall safety and welfare of the young people who stay at the home. Parents said that they are confident that the staff place the safety and welfare of their children at the forefront of practice. One parent said, 'All staff make sure [name of young person] is safe and well cared for during her stay. There is space to play outside for all children but staff ensure that they are kept safe from outsiders.' Another parent said, 'I am confident the staff are passionate about the safety of my child.'

There have been no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection. However, this does not mean that staff are complacent. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities in protecting and promoting the safety and welfare of young people. Their knowledge is underpinned by detailed policies and procedures, including whistleblowing and safeguarding. There have been no complaints about the service. The manager and staff ensure that all the young people, their parents and other parties are aware of the complaints procedure. The manager sends regular questionnaires to the young people, parents and other professionals to seek their opinions and views to continually improve the service and address any shortfalls, no matter how minor they may be.

Staff support the young people in managing their own behaviours. The staff focus on

positive praise and encouragement and, as a result, there have not been any negative consequences or sanctions implemented.

The home is furnished and maintained to a high standard. This means that young people stay in a home that is homely, warm, welcoming and safe.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The manager has the necessary experience, skills and qualifications required to manage a short-break home. She is committed to making sure that all the young people receive a high-quality service and that during their stay they receive an excellent quality of care and support. As a result, this has an impact on the young people's lives and provides them with the experiences and opportunities they may not always have. She is passionate about her role and this is reflected in the high aspirations she and her staff have for all the young people.

Two senior team leaders and an established staff team support the manager within her role. The members of the team undertake regular training to make sure that their skills and knowledge remain current. They regularly reflect on the care that they provide and use the opportunity of team meetings to share research-based practice. Young people also contribute their views as to how the home operates. The staff are child centred, and this is evident in all aspects of care planning, reviewing and consultation. Staff make sure that all the young people are welcomed into the home, commencing their short-break stays when they are ready to do so. Parents commented positively on how well staff support the transition from initial introductions and visits to overnight stays. This is a view echoed by professionals who said that the transition planning is highly individualised and well thought out for each young person.

Staff receive regular formal supervision to enable them to review and reflect on their practice. The views of young people are gathered and form part of the feedback for each staff member's annual appraisal. The manager uses the information gathered to continually update and review staff practice in the home. Training is kept updated. The staff have worked at the home for a number of years, hold relevant qualifications in childcare, and demonstrate excellent skills in supporting the young people and working in partnership with parents, carers and professionals.

All parents, carers, professionals and other interested parties are provided with the home's statement of purpose. This document explains the aims, objectives and ethos of the home. Young people receive a children's guide to the home. In addition, a guide written by young people who have previously received a service from the home further supports this document. This means that the guide is pertinent to the young people receiving a short break.

Monthly independent monitoring visits support the manager's internal monitoring of the service. Any shortfalls identified are addressed in a timely and robust manner. There have been no significant events. However, the manager fully understands her

responsibility within this process, including who she is required to inform if a significant event occurs.

Parents confirmed that they are fully included and involved in the care and support that their children receive. One parent said, 'I cannot praise the staff highly enough. I am confident my child is safe when she stays at the home, and the excitement and joy she demonstrates when she knows it is her time to stay is wonderful to see.' Responses from parents to the annual questionnaires sent by the regulator reiterate the high regard they have for the staff and the service provided.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** SC059842

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Town Hall, Victoria Square, PO Box 29, Bolton BL1 1RU

**Responsible individual:** Sarah Gatenby

**Registered manager:** Julie Whitehead

## Inspector

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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