

# SC040500

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 27 children and young people who are aged between 10 and 18 years.

All places available at this children's home are commissioned on a contractual basis by the Youth Custody Service. The Youth Custody Service may, under certain circumstances, permit local authority children's services to spot purchase a vacant bed at the children's home to enable a local authority to place a child or young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on-site in dedicated facilities.

The experienced and skilled manager is suitably qualified and has been registered with Ofsted for this children's home since July 2007.

**Inspection dates:** 22 to 23 May 2018

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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <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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| Outcomes in education and related learning | 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:** 23 January 2018

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 23/01/2018      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 11/07/2017      | Full            | Outstanding             |
| 08/11/2016      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness  |
| 17/05/2016      | Full            | Outstanding             |

## 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 system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(5)) | 30 June 2018 |

### Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that safety plans and behaviour support plans provide more specific details about the risks that children and young people may present.
- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.18)

In particular, better support children and young people to progress their education and career plans when they leave the home by enabling them to work towards accredited qualifications in all the subjects where this is possible.
- Ensure that health services are delivered in locations which are safe, fit for purpose and have the necessary facilities to meet young people's needs. ('Healthcare standards for children and young people in secure settings', page 34, paragraph 8.1)

In particular, give urgent consideration to relocating the treatment room to a space that is more suitable to better meet the needs of children and young people.
- Ensure that children and young people's health records are readily accessible to all relevant professionals working with the child/young person, subject to protocols and procedures in relation to confidentiality and the application of the data protection act. ('Healthcare standards for children and young people in secure settings', page 39, paragraph 10.2.2)

In particular, rectify the intermittent fault with 'SystmOne' that hinders health staff in creating and updating children and young people's health records.

## Inspection judgements

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

The children and young people make significant and sustained progress, particularly in education, health, behaviour and social interactions. This is because of the excellent tailored care and support and guidance given by a staff team that has the children and young people's best interests at heart.

The home's environment is of an excellent standard. There is a very good balance achieved between safety, security and homeliness. Children and young people have contributed to all areas of the building and there are displays, such as photographs and education projects. The children and young people very much appreciate the high standards of décor and furnishings and they can personalise their rooms.

The children and young people's self-esteem, confidence, communication skills and emotional well-being improve greatly as they respond to the co-ordinated work that the health, education, care and intervention staff teams undertake. A young person said, 'The best thing about living here is the staff. They treat us with respect, and care for us like we are their own children.'

The forging of respectful relationships between the whole staff team and the children and young people is a high priority. These excellent relationships enable the children and young people to trust those who care for them and means that they engage fully with the supporting staff team.

The staff team knows the children and young people exceptionally well. This runs across the whole service, including residential, health and the education staff teams. This results in all staff being able to respond instantly to the presenting individual needs of each child or young person. The children and young people feel safe, secure and well cared for. A young person said, 'I can go to any of the staff to talk. My key worker is ace, we get on great.'

The children and young people react well to the time given to expand their interests, hobbies and leisure pursuits. These include a wide selection of sports, gardening, music, animal care, reading, electronic games, and art and crafts. They learn new skills, including how to work in a team. They enjoy participating in age-appropriate social activities. The social skills that the children and young people develop because of these interactions improve their future life chances.

Consultation takes place frequently with the children and young people about their care and plans for their futures. They attend regular meetings and can share their views and opinions in daily conversations with staff, giving any suggestions for change and improvement. Changes are made because staff and managers listen and act on suggestions, for example buying additional sweets for the tuck shop, menu changes, and the extension of television viewing times at weekends.

The home makes regular use of an advocate to support the children and young people. The children and young people's self-confidence and sense of self substantially increase

as they feel valued.

A very strong emphasis is given to undertaking in-depth, specific and focused work with the children and young people. This assists their understanding of the reasons that have led them to being placed in a secure environment and enables them to make positive changes in their lives. This excellent practice forms part of the children and young people's preparation to return to community life. The children and young people learn how to keep themselves safe and gain independence skills through the use of mobility (planned and approved visits into the community) and implementation of resettlement plans.

The staff team's consistent support empowers children and young people to identify their own goals and aspirations, for example their ambitions and plans to undertake further education, or to train in the field of music or sports. The children and young people learn how to cook, manage a budget and undertake house chores. Along with planning further education, employment, building support networks and embedding positive interests, this provides them with the skills to move forward positively in their lives.

The health staff provide a good level of physical and mental healthcare to the children and young people. They are enthusiastic and dedicated to providing good outcomes. The children and young people feel well supported by health staff. The way in which medicines are managed has improved since the last inspection and is now safer.

An appropriate range of on-site primary care services are delivered regularly and without delay. Health and well-being needs are identified promptly through the Children's Health Assessment Tool, which informs ongoing care. The children and young people receive very good support before they leave the home.

Health recording can be difficult and delayed as the electronic system has glitches. Although there have not been any problems, there is the potential for information to be missed that could have implications for children and young people's care.

The treatment room is too small and has no windows or means of ventilation without keeping the door open. The door is closed when a child or young person is being treated or examined to ensure their privacy. The examination bed cannot be laid flat as the room is too narrow. A recent infection control audit has highlighted the need for a 'splashback' behind the sink, wall-mounted soap and apron dispensers.

Substance misuse staff provide good psychosocial support to the children and young people. They have been creative by introducing therapy through nature. This encourages the children and young people to use nature to support any interventions they are involved in.

The multi-disciplinary mental health team works well together. The team offers a wide range of interventions that are individually tailored to improve the mental and emotional well-being of the children and young people that it supports.

Secure Stairs is currently being piloted at the home. The staff team is being trained and supported to understand how this method of psychological formulation can benefit children and young people who have complex needs.

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

Children and young people told inspectors that they feel very safe and very well cared for. This is in no small part due to the excellent relationships children and young people have with all staff, which engender trust and mutual respect.

Staff know and understand the risks to young people and they manage these exceptionally well. Any risks are assessed when a child or young person is admitted to the home. Regular review of risk and safety plans takes place. Reviews are carried out by a multi-disciplinary team. The recorded actions that are required to manage risks are clear, though details of the presenting risks are not as clear as they could be. This minor shortfall has no discernible impact. Managers review and reflect on where they can improve. For example, they have recently carried out research that has resulted in the purchase of new equipment to assist staff in helping keep children and young people safe when there are any incidents of self-harm.

Managers have a well-established monitoring system to ensure that the checks carried out by staff at night on children and young people are appropriate. Managers have plans to introduce the same system of audits for daytime checks; for example, when children and young people are placed in single separation or choose to spend time alone in their rooms. Although this has not yet been actioned, inspectors were assured by managers that the introduction of this additional monitoring was imminent.

Searches of children and young people are undertaken when there is risk to the child/young person or others, although such searches do not happen often. If staff are concerned that a child or young person is a risk to themselves or others due to having a concealed item, they spend a lot of time talking with them to develop their trust and to persuade them to hand over the item. Any searches that do take place are in an area that provides privacy, are carried out by staff of the same sex, and are fully recorded with the rationale, justification, manager's authorisation and any item found.

Behaviour is managed very well. Staff are excellent role models for children and young people and set high expectations. When needed, sanctions are used appropriately and monitored by managers for their effectiveness. The excellent relationships that staff have with young people are key to the home's success and support the use of the incentive scheme. As a result, children and young people are supported to develop positive social skills and behaviour.

Physical restraint and single separation are used in line with regulations. Records of single separation show the rationale and justification for its use and that managers are involved at all stages in approving continued use, or for the measure of control to come to an end. Support plans clearly identify any health concerns children and young people have that require careful consideration if physical restraint is used. Plans provide clear details of how any concerns are to be managed and staff are very aware of such matters. There is very good oversight and monitoring of restraint incidents. The designated officer from the local authority provides a layer of independent scrutiny of physical restraint incidents. Every incident is reviewed jointly by managers and the designated officer. This provides a level of assurance that practice is safe and conforms to legislation. This monitoring also looks to ensure that practice is of a high standard and

that any learning is identified and actioned. Records of all physical restraint incidents are kept and reflect children and young people's comments. These are used to assist the tailoring of behaviour support plans to further assist staff in supporting children and young people. Children and young people can always see a health professional after any physical restraint. Health records note that children and young people have been seen and the outcomes, although health staff do not always ensure that the main electronic record of the incident reflects the same information. Managers were aware of this at the time of inspection and were taking actions to rectify this matter.

The home has good links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. There have been two child protection matters that have been referred to the local authority since the last inspection. One of these relates to an event that occurred before a child/young person was admitted to the home. Both matters are ongoing and are being managed appropriately in line with the home's procedures. Records reflect the actions that have been, and are being, taken to help to keep children and young people safe.

Managers and staff have a very good awareness of radicalisation and the government's 'Prevent' agenda. There are strong links with the regional police counter-terrorism unit, with regular meetings held to share information and any concerns. Actions are taken as required.

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

Though the registered manager was absent from the home on annual leave during the inspection, his wealth of experience and strong leadership was evident, meaning that the home continued to function at an exceptional level in his absence. The deputy managers have the requisite skill and qualifications to fulfil their roles. Together, the inspirational and dedicated senior management team leads a knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff team.

The one requirement and two recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met. The manager and staff team's continued capacity to improve the care and outcomes for the children and young people enhance future life opportunities.

Detailed external monitoring processes comply with regulations and contribute towards the children and young people's safety and well-being. The manager's internal auditing procedures are thorough and ensure that care of the highest standard is maintained. The views of the children, young people and parents are carefully gathered and used positively to inform care outcomes. However, although there are avenues for the staff team and professionals to express their views, it is not clear whether they are used to influence practice.

The management team is ambitious for the children and young people to receive the exceptional care that they need to achieve the best possible outcomes. The management team constantly strives to implement new and current practices that further enhance the children and young people's opportunities. The use of research-based practice, including introducing the Secure Stairs model and appointing a speech, language and communication specialist, has improved the interventions already available for the children and young people.

Excellent partnership working between all disciplines in the home, and constant oversight by the management team, ensures that all children and young people's progress and achievements are known. This effectively allows for future developments to be identified and incorporated into the home's excellent development plan, for example 'the need to make a difference for young people with speech, language and communication needs'.

Local authority recruitment procedures are applied effectively. This ensures that not only permanent staff, but also agency employees, are of a good calibre to fulfil their roles. All staff team members participate in the same robust training programme. The recent appointment of several new staff team members ensures that there are always sufficient people to care effectively for the children and young people and meet their needs. The children and young people's views were evident in this process as they had their own recruitment panel attended by the applicants. The children and young people take great pride in this process of having their views respected in this way.

It is evident that managers have a thorough understanding of not only the needs of the children and young people, but of the staff team as well. The senior care practitioners are excellent 'pro-social models' for both the staff team and the young people. This inspires confidence and demonstrates that the home's detailed statement of purpose is being met.

Robust individual and group supervision sessions are regularly held with staff. This not only allows for the staff team to receive consistent praise and recognition for its work, but also constructive challenge and redirection when necessary. The children and young people are cared for by a staff team that has the skills and resilience to meet their needs with dignity and compassion.

The excellent, collaborative working between the home and partner agencies includes appropriate professional challenge to ensure that the children and young people receive the care that they need, such as when moving on to further provision.

The management and staff team actively promote equality and diversity. Training and awareness sessions for the staff team and the children and young people ensure that differences are understood. This, and the positive role modelling from the diverse staff group, means that differences are demystified allowing for understanding and acceptance.

### **Outcomes in education and related learning activities: outstanding**

The education staff treat the children and young people with high levels of respect and make very clear their high expectations of them. The children and young people respond very well. They gain in confidence rapidly; their attendance and punctuality are excellent, and their behaviour is exemplary. The children and young people also improve their understanding quickly about the need to respect and tolerate the different views of other children and young people and staff.

Teachers establish the children and young people's starting points and support their needs quickly and very effectively when they arrive at the home. They design highly appropriate and personalised curriculum and support plans for each child and young



person based on their prior attainment, ability and anticipated length of stay. The education staff assess the children and young people progress regularly and thoroughly, amending these arrangements promptly to ensure that the children and young people's needs continue to be met.

Managers plan the curriculum very effectively so that the children and young people can study a broad range of subjects. Lessons take place in excellent and well-maintained learning facilities which are equipped to a very high standard. The children and young people make excellent progress and achieve well in the vast majority of subjects, gaining a wide range of accredited qualifications, including GCSEs.

The children and young people cannot gain accredited qualifications in all subjects, such as in cooking. The recently appointed education manager has identified, as an important priority in the curriculum review carried out since joining the unit, the need to enable the children and young people to gain recognised qualifications through all areas of the curriculum. In addition, she is developing innovative plans to enable the children and young people to gain qualifications through the wide range of enrichment activities that they experience, such as animal care and horticulture.

Very effective links between education, care and health staff ensure that up-to-date information about the children and young people's behaviours and other concerns are shared promptly. Consequently, the education staff anticipate very well the potential problems that may occur in education and plan highly appropriate approaches to manage these, so that any disruption to learning is minimised. Teachers continue to apply the rewards system very well to motivate the children and young people in education.

Managers regularly consult with the children and young people and respond particularly well to their views about education and enrichment activities. They ensure that, in coordination with care staff, the children and young people participate in a wide range of well-planned enrichment activities. Through engaging with external specialists, the children and young people can learn to play the guitar and drums. In response to the children and young people's feedback, managers are developing plans to provide more opportunities for the children and young people to practise playing a wider range of instruments such as the violin.

The quality of leadership and management of education provision is outstanding. The recently appointed education manager is using her early, but very accurate, evaluations of the provision to build on the high-quality provision she has inherited and to plan further improvements and new opportunities for the children and young people. The education manager is subject to very effective challenge about the quality of education and outcomes that the children and young people achieve, as well as support to develop the provision further from the executive headteacher for pupil referral units in the local authority. Through a service level agreement with Connexions, the children and young people receive regular support and guidance about how to plan for their next steps in learning, or a future career, based on their individual circumstances and aspirations.

## **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'.

For inspections of secure children's homes, Ofsted is assisted by an inspector from the Care Quality Commission (CQC) in Ofsted's evaluation of health services provided for children and young people (authorised by HMCI under section 31 of the Care Standards Act 2000).

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC040500

**Provision sub-type:** Secure unit

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

**Responsible individual:** Michael Kelly

**Registered manager:** Michael Lowry M.B.E.

## Inspectors

Ann-Marie Born, social care inspector – lead inspector

Malcolm Fraser, further education and skills HMI

Debbie Foster, social care inspector

Shaun Common, lead professional – secure estate

Andrea Crosby-Josephs, health and justice inspector, Care Quality Commission

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