

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.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2007.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 October 2018

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: 19 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
20/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
11/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children attending the short-break service receive highly individualised care and support. They have excellent relationships with the staff, who are skilled and experienced in supporting children who have complex needs. This, along with the detailed care plans, enables the children to enjoy and benefit from their stay. One child said, 'I love coming here. I get the chance to do lots of things that I cannot do with my family. I have been horse-riding, to the cinema and take part in lots of things at the home which I enjoy.'

Another said, 'This is the best place to stay.'

Parents and professionals say that a key strength of the home is the extensive support and professional involvement the manager and the staff have with each other and with other key services. This enables 'seamless' care for the children and means that the children receive appropriate, consistent care. One parent said: 'This service is wonderful. My child enjoys coming here so much. Staff are an extension to our family. I cannot fault the care given to not only my child, but to all of the family.' One education professional said:

'This home is exceptional. The manager and staff put the needs of young people at the forefront of their practice. They attend education meetings and work in partnership with children and their parents. This home really is outstanding.'

Children's healthcare needs are known and supported exceptionally well. Some children have complex medical needs which require the use of mobility aids and specialist equipment. The manager makes sure that the staff have the necessary training to use all equipment. She links directly with healthcare professionals to arrange this as a matter of urgency in order to minimise the risk of a child's short-break stay being cancelled because of a lack of specialist training.

Children's experiences and opportunities are enhanced during their stay at the home. They take part in a range of activities, both within the home and using local community resources. Examples of these activities include baking, cooking, crafts, computers and using the sensory garden, as well as horse-riding and attending the cinema.

The home provides a warm, welcoming and safe environment. It is furnished and decorated to a high standard, with children fully consulted about the bedrooms they wish to use when staying at the home. There is a safe play area in the garden, along with a sensory garden and an area to grow vegetables and fruit trees, which the children enjoy using.

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

The manager and staff have an excellent understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Detailed risk assessments are in place for each child. These are reviewed each month, or more frequently if required. This means that current risks are

clear and that staff work in accordance with the risk assessments. This supports children to be fully involved in a wide range of age-appropriate activities and experiences that children who do not have complex needs experience, in a safe and supportive way.

There have been no missing from home incidents. However, the manager and staff understand the potential for this to occur. They have devised an individual missing from care risk assessment for each child. In addition, the manager and staff have created individual emergency sheets, which include a photograph of the child, any places they may go to, and information about their health, communication and presenting behaviours when anxious. This information provides police with additional guidance in respect of each child if an incident should occur.

Individual behaviour management plans are in place for all children. The assessments include information on strategies to de-escalate behaviours and strategies of how to reassure and support children. Staff have had extensive training, and, it is encouraging to note that there has been no need to use any form of restraint or physical intervention. This is because of the staff understanding when a child is becoming distressed and how to distract them. Additionally, negative consequences and sanctions are not used. This again is because the staff have an excellent understanding of the children and use alternative distraction techniques before behaviours become heightened. One parent said: 'The reassurance and support they provide to my child is so positive. They really understand him and provide him with the necessary encouragement if he is becoming distressed or over-excited about something.'

The manager ensures that all health and safety checks are in place and kept up to date. An example of this is liaison with the local fire officer in relation to oxygen being used at the home to meet a child's healthcare needs. The procedure implemented by the manager meets all relevant health and safety and fire department guidance.

There have been no new external appointments of staff since the last inspection. The manager follows safer recruitment guidance, contributing to safeguarding children from adults who may pose a risk to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is highly knowledgeable and experienced, and holds the relevant qualifications to fulfil her role. She demonstrates drive and passion, and has high aspirations for all children. This is reflected throughout the staff team, whose members all say that they feel supported and valued, and that they work effectively as a team to provide children with positive experiences during their stay at the home.

Staff receive monthly supervision, which enables them to reflect on their practice and discuss any concerns or issues in relation to the children, as well as discussing their own individual training and development needs. Each year, staff undertake a week of mandatory training. This ensures that their knowledge and practice remain current. In addition to this, staff meetings are used to discuss research and development in relation to children and identify improvements that can be made to the service.

The manager has effective monitoring systems in place to make sure that the service is run in accordance with the statement of purpose, is compliant with all statutory regulations and guidance and reflects the progress and outcomes for all children accessing the service. Additional monitoring is undertaken by an external independent visitor.

Extensive matching of children and impact assessments help to plan the short breaks for each child. Staff work in partnership with parents and professionals to provide holistic support. The manager promotes this well. As a result, parents and professionals hold the home in high esteem. A parent said: 'I love the fact that my daughter is free to do what she chooses and is kept safe. I love the fact that she wants to visit Trackside as it's hard for us to get her away from the TV and computer at home! I feel happy and contented and not worried one bit while she is staying at Trackside's safe, friendly environment. She loves her stays and that means the world to us as parents.'

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: Bernadette Brown

Registered manager: Julie Whitehead

Inspectors

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

Janine Shortman-Thomas, social care inspector

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