

# 1251073

Registered provider: Manchester City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is an adolescent support service provided by the local authority. It provides short stays for up to four children and emergency placements for one child at weekends and on bank holidays. In addition, the service provides intensive, time-limited support to children on the edge of care and their families. This includes planned day visits for children and outreach support for their families.

**Inspection dates:** 14 to 16 November 2018

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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:** 18 January 2018

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
01/09/2017	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

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

The home provides a high-quality service for young people and their families. It provides highly effective intervention for families experiencing crisis in their lives. The support provided by the home is exceptional. It helps young people and their families to stay together and work through their differences and to resolve their problems over time.

Parents reported, 'Staff have been excellent with my children and they have benefited greatly. They have got other services involved and have helped the family with many difficult issues... have always acted quickly to our problems and helped my children from being taken into care.'

Care planning is exceptionally well planned, and practice is highly individualised to meet the specific needs of the young people and their families. The support provided by the home is outstanding and contributes to significant change and improvement for young people and their families' lives.

A condition of the service is that young people and their families must consent to the service's involvement, and they do so willingly, and on a voluntary basis. Consequently, service users are already partially motivated from the start and are committed to achieving the agreed objectives of their plans and are receptive to the help and support offered to them by staff.

A social worker reported, '[The home] is well managed and the staff work very well as a team. All the staff are qualified and are experienced and skilled at developing relationships of trust with children and their families. This means that families which are particularly complex and hard to reach, when referred to the service, are much more likely to engage with, and benefit from, the support of the team and the services delivered.'

Young people benefit from a caring, highly supportive and nurturing environment and enjoy warm and secure relationships with staff. Young people make exceptional progress in relation to their individual starting points and there is strong evidence to support this is the case. Young people who have additional needs have access to therapy at the home to promote their emotional well-being. A mental health practitioner who works with young people at the home reported, 'The home is a successful and positive project. It feels like a nice and safe place for young people to be.' A young person reported, 'It's amazing. The staff here are really friendly and they're nice to me. They respect me in the nicest way.'

Staff maintain highly effective partnerships with the home's partner agencies, such as careers advisers, mental health practitioners, schools, social workers, housing and the youth offending service, to ensure that young people and their families benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. Staff escalate concerns and challenge the decisions of other professional agencies if they believe this to be in the best interests of

young people. Staff ensure that the needs of young people and their families are prioritised effectively.

Young people enjoy positive activities at the home and in the wider community. Staff actively promote each individual's specific interests and hobbies. They encourage young people to sustain their interests when living with their families. Young people reported, 'They take me on activities, like bike rides and trips' and 'They get me out in the community and keep me busy.'

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

Young people want to remain living at home with their families. Staff provide their parents and carers with the support mechanisms that they need to make this happen. They work creatively and proactively with young people to address their specific needs, including relationship building and managing feelings, behaviours and anxieties, to bring about change and improvement in their lives. A young person reported, 'It has helped me a lot with me and my dad, where we live and dad getting a job. Would change nothing because nothing needs changing.'

Young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Staff consistently place the safety of young people at the centre of their practice. They have an excellent knowledge of child protection procedures and are always alert to the risk of harm, including county lines, child trafficking, online grooming and child sexual exploitation. Staff are trained in child protection, so they know how to identify abuse and deal with any allegations. Significant incidents are shared with the appropriate safeguarding agencies to support young people and to protect them from harm.

Staff have developed an excellent understanding of the specific needs and emerging vulnerabilities of young people and their families and take appropriate action to address them. Young people become increasingly safer because of the actions that staff take to support and protect them. Young people are kept safe and are less likely to suffer actual harm. An independent reviewing officer reported, '[staff] built a good relationship with the family and child, which has in turn enabled the [child] to provide information about the abuse. Staff had good knowledge of, and oversight into, the case.'

Staff have an excellent understanding of research-informed practice, which makes an exceptional difference to the lives and experiences of young people. Staff are trained to undertake Family Group Conferences (FGC) to empower families to stay together and complete AIM's assessments to support work with young people who display sexually harmful behaviours and to reduce their risk of harm. Signs of safety underpins all aspects of staff's practice in assessing risk and ensuring effective safety planning for young people.

Staff work tirelessly and show a great deal of dedication, enthusiasm and determination to keep young people safe, while enabling families to stay together. They help young people to resolve their conflicts positively and to encourage their positive behaviour. Unsafe behaviours, such as offending, drug misuse, anti-social behaviour and going

missing from home for lengthy periods, have reduced considerably in relation to most young people's starting points. Young people reported, 'They keep me occupied and have kept me away from criminal activity.'

There have been no complaints, or sanctions, since the last inspection. There has been one restraint which was low level and of a short duration. The behaviours of young people are managed safely and effectively by staff. Staff work consistently with hard-to-reach young people and they do not give up on them easily.

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

Young people benefit from a home that is managed in their best interests. The home is managed efficiently and effectively. The registered manager demonstrates strong and effective leadership of the operation of the home. The home benefits from a well-qualified and experienced leadership team that leads staff by example and is inspiring in its approach. Leaders and managers are passionate about the service and they consistently strive to achieve the best outcomes possible for young people and their families.

Staff feel extremely well supported, professionally managed and led. The registered manager stimulates their enthusiasm and channels staff's efforts effectively. The registered manager has consistently high expectations of staff and high aspirations for young people. She promotes a culture of positivity, which the staff team embraces. Staff share and implement the home's ethos, approach and philosophy in caring for young people. Young people benefit from a diverse staff team. Staff employed are all well trained, extremely experienced, skilled and suitably qualified.

The home meets and exceeds the aims and objectives set out in its statement of purpose. It provides an outstanding-quality service for young people and their families that contributes to continuing change and improvement in their lives.

Interventions to prevent family or placement breakdown have been highly successful in enabling young people on the edge of care to remain living with their families. Young people and their families benefit from well-coordinated, multi-agency support to improve their life chances and outcomes. Evidence supports that interventions used have been highly successful in preventing young people from becoming looked after.

There are effective arrangements for reviewing and improving the quality of young people's care. The home is visited each month by an independent professional who scrutinises the performance of the home and the arrangements made to safeguard young people and to promote their well-being.

The registered manager makes effective use of the home's internal and external monitoring activities to secure the home's continuing improvement. She uses stakeholder feedback to understand the strengths and any weaknesses of the home. The manager also implements a development plan to set realistic, yet challenging, targets that enable the service to further develop and evolve. There are no breaches in regulation. As a

result, there are no requirements or recommendations made following this inspection.

## **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:** 1251073

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

**Registered provider:** Manchester City Council

**Registered provider address:** Town Hall, Albert Square, Manchester M60 2LA

**Responsible individual:** Sean McKendrick

**Registered manager:** Valerie Jenkinson

## Inspector

Anthony Kyem: social care inspector

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