

# SC037521

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a local authority operated children's home. The home provides planned short-break overnight respite care seven days a week for up to eight children irrespective of gender, aged between 8 and 18 years, who have physical or sensory disabilities and complex health needs, and who may display challenging behaviour because of their disability. The home also has provision to offer a ninth placement on an emergency basis. The needs of all children and young people using the services are fully assessed prior to the commencement of any stay to ensure that appropriate matching and risk assessment take place to determine which young people receive a service on any particular night.

The registered manager has been in post since July 2013.

**Inspection dates:** 4 to 5 December 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 13 December 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
16/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## 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, the 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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi) and (vii))</p>	04/01/2019

### Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Inspection judgements

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

The children and young people look forward to, and enjoy, coming to stay at this home. This is because they have opportunities to interact with others and have positive experiences. Activities are planned to meet the individual needs of the children and young people. For some, this really aids their ability to be more creative in developing their unique skills. One young person's artwork is displayed throughout the home.

Staffing ratios ensure that the children's and young people's complex health and care needs are managed well. Well-documented care plans and individualised targets ensure that children and young people are at the forefront of staff practice. The children and young people make progress and grow in self-confidence and independence through their achievements.

The children and young people are beginning to benefit from the specialist training that some staff have received, such as signs of safety and social pedagogy. This has seen a greater understanding of the range of techniques and approaches in engaging and communicating with the children and young people, including those who cannot communicate verbally. One member of staff said: 'It strengthens the relationship between the practitioner and the child or young person and creates a common experience.'

All the children and young people are supported to attend school while they are receiving respite care. Communication with schools and parents promotes a smooth transition and consistency of care. Communication records and the upkeep of daily diary sheets and progress reports support the quality of the service provision taking place in the home. However, there is room for improvement, particularly in relation to the quality and clarity of recording.

Collaborative planning for children and young people who are transitioning from the home ensures that there is minimum stress and anxiety for them, and their families. Staff provide good support to children and young people who are moving to alternative care homes. This has seen them settle well with minimal disruption. A social worker said: 'The home has done well with [name of child] in considering that he has not had the best of experiences, with lots of disruptions to his care. Through this, the staff have provided stability.'

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

Children and young people who spend time at the home feel safe and protected. They are comfortable in their surroundings. Their demeanour and interaction with staff convey the trusting relationships that have been established.

Staff ensure that protective measures are in place to safeguard the children and young

people, both in the environment of the home and in the community. Staff are adept at anticipating behaviours and use strategies that reduce anxieties. Where there has been a need for physical restraint this has been proportionate and used to protect from harm to self and others.

All staff are experienced and trained to manage the complex health needs of the children and young people and any risks associated with their disabilities. Potential safeguarding concerns are recorded. However, there have been some inconsistencies in the following of procedures and the sharing of information with relevant individuals. A requirement has been made at this inspection.

Parents and carers feel reassured and are very confident that their children are safe and well cared for. A parent commented: 'A big thank you for all your advice and support over the last years! [Name of child] has loved his stays. We couldn't have managed without a short break to catch our breath. You are a brilliant service.'

Due to staff vigilance and close supervision of this vulnerable group of children and young people, the risk of them going missing or being exploited is minimised.

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

The home is run by an experienced manager who remains motivated and passionate about delivering a high-quality service. Most of the staff team are long-standing employees, and the children and young people have 'grown up' in the care of the same staff group. Equally, relationships with parents are well established. This has created a culture of openness and transparency.

Emergency admissions to the home have seen some impact on service delivery resulting in a period when there were a significant number of breaks cancelled at short notice. The manager has worked collaboratively with the senior leadership team, and action has been taken to address these matters.

A key strength of the home is the manager's drive to build a 'culture of participation'. Significant inroads have been made in understanding the world the children and young people live in, which has enhanced their quality of life and experiences. The enthusiasm and drive of one member of staff sees children's and young people's progress and achievements praised and celebrated. The member of staff said: 'The service needs to be built around the children and young people and we have to adapt to that.'

Staff receive regular and reflective supervision. Team meetings are weekly, resulting in increased staff attendance and better governance. Safe recruitment practices are in place and new staff receive a robust period of induction.

The manager utilises external monitoring systems and feedback from parents and professionals to evaluate the quality of care and practice 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:** SC037521

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

**Registered provider:** Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Riverside House, Main Street, Rotherham, South Yorkshire S60 1AE

**Responsible individual:** Mary Jarrett

**Registered manager:** Darren Higgins

## Inspector

Cath Sikakana: social care inspector

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