

1275569

Registered provider: The Mulberry Bush Organisation Ltd

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

According to the home's statement of purpose, the home provides an integrated combination of residential therapeutic care, treatment and education for primary school-aged children with severe social, emotional and mental health difficulties.

The home is made up of three separate houses, providing care for children for either 38 or 52 weeks a year. At the time of the inspection, 21 children were living at the home across the three houses.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 18 June 2018.

The inspectors only inspected the social care provision at this school.

Inspection date: 29 March 2023

Date of last inspection: 20 December 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children are cared for by staff who are attentive and familiar with each child's personality and needs. Interactions between children and staff are warm and nurturing. Children have an enjoyable time and are supported to make good progress towards goals that are important to them.

Staff understand the importance of predictable routines for children. Children are supported to engage in education, and they make good progress from their starting points. Activities are planned around the education timetable, and children told the inspectors that they can participate in a range of activities that they enjoy.

Managers make sure that children have regular opportunities to discuss the way that the service is run. This helps to reassure children that their views are important and that their voices are being heard.

Some children have told managers that they sometimes experience racial discrimination and bullying from other children. Managers respond robustly to help children understand that this is not acceptable. Additionally, there is a whole-school focus on celebrating diversity.

The safety of children

Managers have invested time and energy into addressing the shortfalls that were identified at the last inspection.

Records of physical restraint demonstrate improved practice in relation to the use of de-escalation techniques to try and avoid the need for physical restraint.

All incidents of physical restraint are now followed by a debrief with the children and staff involved. The information gathered during the debriefs is used to consider how to prevent a recurrence.

Managers have arranged to have a daily time slot with the local authority designated officer to discuss allegations and complaints about staff and any other safeguarding concerns. As a result, there is opportunity for timely independent scrutiny of the safety plans that are put in place to safeguard children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

Management monitoring of the use of physical restraint has improved. Managers carry out a careful review of all incidents of physical restraint to ensure that the use of the measure was appropriate and proportionate.

Staff speak positively about the support they receive from managers. Leaders have recognised that the head of care would benefit from assistance due to the complexity of the role. Leaders are in the process of recruiting safeguarding and quality assurance managers.

Staff recruitment and retention have been ongoing challenges for managers. There is not currently a full staff complement, and managers are actively recruiting to fill care staff vacancies. In the interim, managers are making sure that there are sufficient staff to care safely for children by reducing the amount of residential provision that is offered.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/12/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/04/2021	Full	Outstanding
05/11/2019	Full	Outstanding
23/10/2018	Full	Outstanding

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1275569

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Mulberry Bush Organisation Ltd

Responsible individual: Lee Wright

Registered manager: Claire McCarthy

Inspectors

Helen Simmons, Regulatory Inspection Manager
Lee Kirwin, Regulatory Inspection Manager

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023