

# SC059842

Registered provider: Bolton Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This local authority short-break service provides care for up to four children. The provider states in its statement of purpose that the overall aim of the children's home is to provide high-quality, planned and short-break care for children with severe learning disabilities. The manager has been in post since October 2022.

### Inspection dates: 23 and 24 March 2023

**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:** 22 March 2022

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2022	Full	Outstanding
21/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
11/10/2018	Full	Outstanding
19/12/2017	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

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

Children enjoy their short breaks at the home. The home is beautifully decorated and resourced to meet the different needs of the children who stay. There are lots of photos of the children proudly displayed.

The home has recently involved children in the recording of a video children's guide. This gives children, particularly those with additional needs, a better understanding of the home and individuals in the staff team before they begin their stays.

The staff are child-centred and work hard to ensure that children are supported to celebrate different events throughout the year. These are planned to ensure that all children are included. This could be through stories and visuals or sensory exploration.

The staff work closely with children's schools and have built good relationships with them. Staff attend reviews of the children's education, health and care plans (EHC). However, the targets in the plans at the home do not always reflect those agreed to support the children's development of new skills and provide consistency.

Some of the children have enjoyed activities such as going to the beach and a barge trip on the canal. These are great experiences for children. However, children are not always encouraged and supported to go out in the local community during their stays. This means that opportunities to develop their independence and social skills are being missed.

Children's individual health needs are understood by staff. Staff receive appropriate clinical training and have their competency assessed. However, children's plans lack detail around how specific conditions and needs should be managed. This means that staff do not always have the information needed to support the children with these.

Due to some of the complex needs of the children who stay at the home, there is surveillance equipment in place. However, the level of the equipment used is not regularly reviewed and assessed. This impacts on children's privacy.

Children are supported to develop their communication skills using methods that they are used to during their stays. The staff are aware of the children's communication barriers and are creative in supporting children to have their voice heard. For example, there is a children's representative who meets with a staff member monthly to advocate on behalf of the other children.

Children are encouraged to complete feedback forms in a format that they understand. The staff then review and act on their requests. Children have also

been included in the interview process for a new staff member. This ensures that children feel involved and listened to.

The staff plan children's stays sensitively. Friendships between children are encouraged, and staff consider children's likes and dislikes when planning who they are going to stay with. This means that children get the most from their stays.

The home has lots of communal space, including a large garden and sensory room. However, there are locks on doors in communal areas. These need removing to ensure that children can freely access all that is on offer to them during their stays.

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

Children are kept safe during their stays. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and children's individual risks. Moving and handling equipment is serviced and maintained. Maintenance requests are addressed quickly. This ensures that the environment is safe for children.

The staff recently arranged a coffee morning for families to discuss transition for those children approaching 18. The manager invited transition social workers, and a resource booklet was created by staff, which was full of useful information. However, the manager has not assessed the impact of young people aged 18 staying at the home with children.

Physical restraint at the home is rare. This means that children are supported by staff that are skilled in de-escalation and understand the children well. However, the creative strategies identified are not always included in the risk assessments following incidents.

Some children that stay at the home have complex physical needs. However, mechanical restraint, such as the use of a bed with high sides, is being used without being included in children's EHC plans. The use of mechanical restraint is also not included in the home's statement of purpose. This means that this restrictive measure has not been agreed by all those involved in the child's life, and its use has not been reviewed.

Safer recruitment processes are followed, and staff receive training in safeguarding disabled children. These practices ensure that children who come to stay at the home are kept safe.

However, when there are incidents, records do not always include the details of the children involved, which is needed to be able to monitor these effectively.

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

The manager also has responsibility for another of the local authority's homes. In his absence, he is supported by three senior staff members. The staff say they feel

supported by the manager and that he is readily available for any advice, guidance and support.

During a period of change in the staff team, the manager arranged for counselling for the staff to support them with the changes. This was well received by staff and ensured that the impact of the changes on the children was reduced.

The manager ensures that staff receive training to equip them to support children with complex health needs. This means that children are able to enjoy their stay and be cared for by staff with the skills and knowledge to do so. However, the staff have not had training in autism spectrum disorder or had this refreshed.

The staff team is largely consistent, and the manager does not use agency staff. This provides consistency for the children. However, the rotas of staff do not include their full names. This does not meet regulatory requirements.

The manager assesses the suitability of the children referred to the service well. However, once they begin their overnights, he does not have a register of this with all the information required. In addition, it is not always clear on the records which child is being referred to.

The manager has a good oversight of the home and uses systems such as team meetings and supervision sessions to ensure that he maintains a good understanding of what is happening in the home. However, the manager has not ensured that there is a workforce development plan in place.

## 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>(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This relates specifically to risk assessments being in place when children turn 18 to look at the potential impact of them using the service with children under 18.</p>	12 May 2023
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a))</p> <p>This relates specifically to children's targets on their plans and ensuring that there are clear guidelines on how staff are to support each target and make sure that these are reviewed for progress.</p> <p>This also relates to the planning of a wider range of activities and experiences for the children when they come to stay.</p>	12 May 2023
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p>	12 May 2023

<p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(h))</p> <p>This relates specifically to the staff team receiving training in autism spectrum disorder.</p> <p>This further relates to the use of mechanical restraint being included in the home's statement of purpose.</p> <p>The manager should also implement and keep up to date a workforce development plan and ensure that necessary children's details are included in incident reports.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</p> <p>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>is necessary and proportionate;</p> <p>is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and</p> <p>allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe.</p> <p>(Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))</p> <p>This relates to the removal of locks on the internal doors of communal areas.</p>	12 May 2023
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p>	12 May 2023

<p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(c)(d))</p> <p>This relates specifically to the review of monitoring systems in place for children during the night.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the name of the child;</p> <p>details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure;</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure;</p> <p>the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used;</p> <p>the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p>	<p>12 May 2023</p>



<p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.</p> <p>Paragraph (3) does not apply in relation to restraint that is planned or provided for as a matter of routine in the child's EHC plan or statement of special educational needs.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(4))</p> <p>This relates specifically to a review of any mechanical restraint used in the home and ensuring that these are included in children's EHC plans or that they are appropriately recorded in line with paragraph 3.</p>	
<p>Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home.</p> <p>Register of children</p> <p>A record in the form of a register showing in respect of each child—</p> <p>the date of the child's admission to the children's home;</p> <p>the date on which the child ceased to be accommodated in the home;</p> <p>the child's address immediately before being accommodated in the home;</p> <p>the child's address on leaving the home;</p> <p>the child's placing authority; and</p> <p>the statutory provision (if any) under which the child is accommodated.</p> <p>Staff, staff rosters, persons residing or working in the home, visitors</p>	<p>12 May 2023</p>

A record showing in respect of each person working at the home—

the person's full name.

(Regulation 37 (1) Schedule 4 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f) (2)(a))

## Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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 address:** Town Hall, Victoria Square, PO Box 29, Bolton BL1 1RU

**Responsible individual:** Ian Walker

**Registered manager:** Neil Haydock

## Inspector

Kerri Lynch-Mahoney, Social Care Inspector

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