

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 bank holidays. In addition, the service provides intensive, time-limited support to children on the edge of care. This includes planned day visits for children and outreach support for their families.

The manager registered with Ofsted in 2017.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 March 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2020	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
18/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Most children benefit from the support on offer at the home. However, not all children's experiences have been positive. One child moved into the home without leaders assessing known risks or providing staff with clear strategies to manage them.

The home provides bespoke edge of care services to children and their families. Staff support children with planned short breaks and access to emergency accommodation when families are in crisis. Families can also access family group conferences, speech and language, therapeutic and outreach support services.

Children have planned outreach key-work sessions and enjoy positive activities. Some children have been supported to go on holiday and further develop their independence skills. Some children are able to participate in experiences they may not otherwise be able to do.

Social workers are positive about the support on offer and the outcomes that are achieved by the staff at the home. One social worker said, 'The aim for the child was to improve challenging behaviour at home, support with EHC [education, health and care] plan and child accessing full-time education, all of which was achieved.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

When children come to the home on an emergency basis, social workers provide staff with a risk assessment. However, one child arrived at the home with known risks in relation to knives, gangs and criminality. None of the staff had training in these areas. There was no assessment as to whether the child's risks could be managed by staff. The child subsequently went missing from the home and suffered significant harm in the community.

Staff complete missing-from-home risk assessments for children. These assessments detail the risks to children in the community, such as specific individuals or addresses. When children go missing from home, staff report them missing to police. However, it is not always clear if staff do anything else, such as go out and physically search for children.

Children's risk assessments are underpinned by a safeguarding model used throughout the local authority. Risk assessments detail the risks posed to children and staff. However, not all risk assessments clearly tell staff what they need to do in response to each identified risk.

Children are supported by staff to regulate their own behaviours and understand risks. For some children, this work has directly contributed to them being able to remain living with their family. One parent said, 'I don't know what magic they work here, but my son is a different child. They have helped to keep him living with us.'

Staff are appropriately trained in the use of physical intervention. Staff use a number of different de-escalation techniques to prevent the need for physical intervention. They use physical intervention only as a last resort. On the one occasion this has been used, it was needed to prevent harm to a child.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is managed by an experienced manager who is well respected by her team. The manager is supported by two assistant managers, to ensure that the home has constant management oversight.

Staff have not always received training relevant to the needs of the children. One child who stayed at the home was at significant risk that staff were not trained to manage. This means that staff may not have had the necessary skills or knowledge to support the child. Leaders have not ensured that staff have received relevant training prior to children moving in.

The most recent quality of care review was completed by an assistant manager and not the registered manager, as required by regulation. The review does not detail what the registered manager intends to do to maintain or improve the quality of care provided to children staying at the home. This means that it is not clear how the service will be maintained or improved moving forward.

At the last inspection, a recommendation was made to improve the quality of the visits to the home by the independent visitor. However, these visits and reports have not improved. Children are not routinely spoken to by the independent person visiting the home. This means that there are missed opportunities to explore and challenge the experiences of children in the home.

Managers support staff effectively with group supervisions, team meetings and team development days. These help support team morale, learning and continued professional development.

Professionals are positive about the management of the home. One social work team manager said, 'I have always found the leadership of the home to be strong and it is evident that staff who work at [name of home] are well supported in carrying out their roles.'

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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that known risks to children are assessed when children come to stay at the home, and should assess if staff have had the training to manage any assessed risks.</p>	14 April 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> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.</p>	14 April 2023

<p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff have training in relation to gangs, criminal exploitation and knife crime.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI.</p> <p>(Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b) (4)(a)(b) (7)(a))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person should ensure the independent person speaks to children and professionals when visiting the home. The registered person should ensure that copies of all reports by the independent person are sent to Ofsted.</p>	<p>14 April 2023</p>
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p>	<p>14 April 2023</p>

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(c))

In particular, the registered person must be the person who completes the quality of care review, which must include actions to maintain or improve the services provided to children.

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: 1251073

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Manchester City Council

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

Responsible individual: Sean McKendrick

Registered manager: Valerie Jenkinson

Inspector

Rob Neild, Social Care Inspector

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