

SC046524

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure children's home

This home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict children's liberty.

The home provides care for up to 10 children. Up to five children can be placed by the Youth Custody Service and up to five children can be placed by local authorities under section 25 of the Children Act 1989. Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years old requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The manager of the home registered with Ofsted in August 2023.

The judgement areas of children's education and learning, and health, were not considered as part of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 16 to 18 January 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

The secure 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: 31 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This home was judged inadequate at the full inspection that took place from 31 October to 2 November 2023. Inspectors found significant shortfalls with regards to the safety and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. As a result, Ofsted issued a notice restricting accommodation and three compliance notices under regulations 13, 20 and 33.

Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit on 3 January 2024 to review the actions taken in response to the compliance notice issued under regulation 20, and the notice restricting accommodation. At that time, the compliance notice was judged to be unmet and was reissued. The notice restricting accommodation remained in place.

The purpose of this inspection was to review the actions taken in response to the compliance notices. The visit also looked at the home's compliance with the notice restricting accommodation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2023	Full	Inadequate
28/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/02/2022	Full	Outstanding
01/09/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Children have positive experiences and enjoy trusting relationships with staff. This helps them to feel safe, make good progress and have aspirations for their future. Children say that they are well cared for and that this has made a significant difference to their lives.

Children from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds are cared for by a diverse staff team. This means that staff can understand and meet children's individual needs.

Staff have a good understanding of children's interests and skills. This knowledge is used to help children to build confidence and, in some instances, begin to address previous trauma and harmful experiences. The use of music to help children is particularly good and has helped them to articulate their thoughts and feelings through poetry and song.

Planning for one child to move on from the home has been well managed despite the uncertainty around their new home. In addition, discussions around children moving to the adult estate happen early. Children are involved and feel that their opinions are valued and considered.

Improvements have been made to the home environment with visual displays better representing children's current activities, events and achievements. Work on the wider environment remains in progress and needs to continue.

The language used by staff in children's care records is getting better. It is more child-centred and focuses on children's strengths. This is a very recent change in practice and needs to be embedded further.

Children's social workers are positive about the quality of care that children receive and have observed much progress and positive change. The multi-disciplinary working approach is gradually becoming normal practice across the home between care staff, the health team and teaching staff.

There is water damage in an area that staff use. This area is for those carrying out sleep-in duties. Should more than eight children live in the home, this area would need to be fully operational to ensure that staff can monitor children and meet their needs effectively.

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

Staff now understand the legal criteria for single separation, where children are locked into an area alone, and managing away, where children are locked into an area but with staff always present. However, since the last inspection, there have been no single separation or managed away incidents. As a result, staff have not had the opportunity to put this learning into practice.

The 'resolve and restore' discussions between staff and children reflect the settled period children are currently experiencing. Consequently, there have been very few incidents of physical restraint because staff are more able to diffuse and de-escalate situations when they arise.

The management team has taken action since the last visit to strengthen the oversight, scrutiny and review of all incidents. However, this will need to be further embedded and tested when more children are admitted to the home.

There is a good focus on collaborative working across the home. Multi-disciplinary meetings are still in their infancy but are being used effectively to inform staff about children's therapeutic needs. Systems are now in place to bring this work into recording activity and children's care plans.

Managers are instilling a child-focused learning culture throughout the staff team. The team benefits from formal delivery of trauma-informed practice training from the health team. This supports staff in their day-to-day practice and better reflects children's needs.

Children enjoy trusting relationships with managers and staff and they know that they are listened to. Inspectors observed good humour and warm, nurturing interactions between children and staff. This is reflected in children being settled. This supports children to feel safe and supported living in this home.

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

A range of management auditing and quality assurance processes are now in place. These are utilised to raise practice standards and drive forward consistency. These processes also set the foundations for improvements in practice and compliance with the legal framework on the use of single separation and managing away.

All staff now receive monthly supervision in accordance with policy guidance. This has also ensured that discussions have taken place in relation to staff's understanding of single separation and managing away. Performance development reviews have been prioritised and staff have set targets for the forthcoming year. Staff said that they are now feeling more supported in their role.

The revised recruitment strategy places a lot of emphasis on developing and retaining a skilled and competent workforce. The recent recruitment drive has seen many expressions of interest that will complement the existing diverse workforce. Career pathways are more accessible and the new management structure provides additional support to staff.

Safer recruitment processes are in place and ensure that children are cared for by suitable people. Any issues raised from checks carried out are investigated. This ensures that only adults who are thoroughly vetted and assessed as being safe to work with vulnerable children are allowed to work in the home.

The restructure of the management team has created additional capacity and provided more support to staff. They have been appropriately challenged about their practice, and the ethos and working practices in the home are more nurturing and restorative as a result.

Following this inspection, the compliance notices under regulations 13, 20 and 33 and the requirements under regulations 14 and 45 have been met. The requirement under regulation 23 in relation to medication was not looked at and will be carried over to the next inspection. The notice restricting accommodation has been met and has not been reissued.

What does the secure 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 registered person must make arrangements for the handling, safe keeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home.</p> <p>in particular the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c))</p>	<p>14 January 2024</p>

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a workforce plan in place which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of Regulation 16, Schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). In particular, establish suitable transitional arrangements to ensure effective oversight and management of children’s education provision when the current head of learning leaves the service. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that teaching staff have access to focused continual professional development to further develop their teaching practice. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that the home makes available suitable facilities, equipment and resources for learning. In particular, ensure that the head of learning has the time to manage and support the teaching team effectively. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that sufficient suitably trained staff are on duty to meet the assessed needs of all children in the home. In particular, the home should not admit more than eight children until the staff sleep-in room and associated areas are fully repaired so that staff can meet children’s needs. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 51, paragraph 10.1)

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'.

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC046524

Provision sub-type: Secure unit

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual: Sally Williams

Registered manager: Joanne Peebles

Inspectors

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

Dawn Parton, Social Care Inspector

Thirza Smith, Social Care Inspector

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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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 2024