

SC037521

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority service provides care and accommodation during short breaks for up to nine children who may have a learning disability and/or a physical disability.

Since the last inspection, there has been a variation in the conditions of registration for one child to live permanently at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

On the day of the inspection, four children accessed the short-breaks service.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 January 2024

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: 7 February 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
25/08/2021	Full	Outstanding
23/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
04/12/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

The shortfalls identified at this inspection relate to the quality of care provided to one child, which had an impact on their safety and their experience. Decisions and responses to children's behaviour have not always been child-centred and have increased the risk of harm. At times, the police have been called when incidents have escalated.

Most children are provided with positive experiences when they stay at the home and enjoy positive relationships with staff who are attuned to their individual needs. Staff help children to build positive relationships with their peers. Consideration is given when planning for children to stay at the home to enable them to spend time with peers who share similar interests, and this has allowed their friendships to flourish.

Children experience a wide range of enjoyable and exciting activities. Staff ensure that children are not defined by their disability, and some children have enjoyed kayaking and go-karting. Staff have established links with local sports clubs, and children have enjoyed going to football, rugby and ice hockey games. This helps children to be involved in the wider community.

Children are provided with a homely environment. When children stay at the home, staff encourage them to bring personal items with them, and they ensure that children's bedrooms are personalised. This provides children with a sense of belonging and makes them feel secure.

Children respond to positive routines and structure when they come to stay at the home. Staff help children to develop independence and social skills in line with the children's individual plans. This provides children with invaluable skills as they transition into adulthood.

For one child, moving into this home on a temporary basis has meant that their health needs were better met, sleep patterns improved and they attended school regularly.

Staff ensure that children's achievements are celebrated and displayed proudly in the home. Children's experiences of visiting the home are captured in photos that are displayed around the home and in memory books. However, for one child who lived at the home temporarily, this has not happened.

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

Most risk assessments identify the risks to individual children well. However, one child's risk assessment does not provide clear guidance for staff in relation to the use of restraint and procedures for calling the police to the home. Not all staff have a clear understanding of when this action should be taken and of their responsibility to safeguard children.

Most children have good experiences and are well safeguarded. However, staff do not always understand some children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. When one child has shown unwanted and risky behaviour, the decision to allow the child out into the community increased the risk to the child, who lacks road safety awareness and led to the police being called. Staff and the child have not been provided with the opportunity to reflect on this incident.

The details of a serious incident, which led to one member of staff being injured and the police being called to the home, are not well recorded and do not provide any clarity on how the incident escalated. The shortfalls in staff practice that are identified from the records are not escalated or challenged by leaders and managers. This includes staff's rationale for their actions of calling the police and their intentions, which do not align with good childcare or child-centred practice.

When staff have held children in response to keeping them and others safe, the records connected to some of these holds are inconsistent. In some cases, the quality of records is poor; they lack detail about what happened, and the holds used. Staff and children have not always been provided with the opportunity to talk about the measure used. When a debrief does happen, it is not always within regulatory timescales, and the details are not cross-checked to ensure that what staff say happened has been logged on the child's record. This does not ensure children's records are an accurate reflection of their care.

Allegations against staff are taken seriously. They are investigated and shared with safeguarding professionals for independent oversight.

Staff support children when they want to make a complaint. When one child made a complaint, it was taken seriously, investigated and the outcome shared with the child.

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

The lack of management oversight of children's records and staff development means actions in response to poor practice and learning have not been identified and/or addressed.

Ofsted were not notified of two serious incidents requiring police involvement in relation to a child staying at the home. This lack of notification does not provide assurances of strong management oversight.

Staff are committed to children and love their work. They want the best outcomes for children. However, the majority of staff have not updated their safeguarding training within the timescales outlined in the home's statement of purpose. Several staff members are not well equipped to meet the complex needs of the children at this home due to a lack of training.

When errors have been made in relation to the administration of children's medication, the shortfalls have been addressed in team meetings. Some staff have accessed additional training to prevent further errors.

Most staff receive supervision that is reflective and provides the opportunity to discuss the children. Staff said that the manager is approachable, and they feel supported.

The manager has established strong relationships with professionals involved with the children and their families. One parent said, 'The manager and staff are great. They have bent over backward to help us. The support has been invaluable.'

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; and</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's risk assessments provide clear guidance for staff to follow in relation to the use of restraint. Children's risk assessments should include guidance about when police involvement is needed to ensure that staff understand and apply this.</p>	18 March 2024
<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>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p>	18 March 2024

<p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and</p> <p>(Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(f))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff are provided with training to equip them to meet the needs of the children who stay at the home.</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>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 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>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>18 March 2024</p>

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))</p>	18 March 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of the time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 62, paragraph 14.5)

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: SC037521

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

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

Responsible individual: Simon Breeds

Registered manager: Richard Fisher

Inspectors

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector

Rachel Walker, Social Care Inspector

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