

# 1263766

Registered provider: Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care for up to four children who may experience social and/or emotional and learning difficulties.

Four children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since November 2023 but has been absent from the home for several months.

### Inspection dates: 30 April and 1 May 2024

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account**      **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected      inadequate

The effectiveness of leaders and managers      inadequate

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

**Date of last inspection:** 22 August 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/05/2023	Full	Inadequate
02/08/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/05/2022	Full	Inadequate

## Inspection judgements

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

Significant shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home have left children being exposed to harm. Consequently, children's progress is limited and their experiences are not always positive.

Children say they like living at the home. They are supported to develop positive relationships with the core staff team. However, staffing shortages are regularly covered by bank staff and staff from the local authority's other homes. This means that children receive inconsistent care and are not always cared for by staff who know them or the home well. This is something that the Interim Head of Service is taking action to address.

Children's moves into and out of the home are not well planned. Decisions made by senior leaders for children to move into the home when their needs could not be safely met alongside the needs of other children living in the home have negatively impacted on the experiences of all children. Leaders and managers have not ensured that children are listened to or that their views are considered in decisions about their care. This does not enable children to feel included or cared for.

Children's attendance in education is varied. Three children currently living in the home are supported by staff to attend school on a regular basis. However, another child and children who previously lived at the home have not had adequate education plans in place and plans for them to access learning in the home have been unclear. This does not support children to achieve their educational potential and limits their opportunities for the future.

Staff support and encourage family time between children, family members and carers. This helps children to maintain relationships with people who are important to them.

Ongoing repairs and decoration to some areas of the home mean that it is now maintained to a good standard. Children's bedrooms are personalised to reflect their interests. Further work is planned to improve the decor in all communal areas of the home.

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

Shortfalls in safeguarding practices have left children and staff exposed to harm. Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that all staff, including casual staff, understand their responsibilities to keep children safe and that they are adequately trained to meet children's needs. Consequently, staff have not responded appropriately to children's behaviours. This has resulted in children being exposed to and experiencing harm, significant damage being caused to the home and children's

access to communal areas being restricted. Concerns regarding children's behaviours have also resulted in decisions for children to move out of the home quickly. This does not provide children with positive or safe experiences.

Children's risks and vulnerabilities are not well understood or responded to appropriately. Risk management strategies used in the home have been ineffective in keeping children safe. Dynamics between children have not been well managed. Consequently, some children witnessed extreme behaviours from other children and have been subjected to harm. Strategies used in response to one child's behaviours have impacted on all children living in the home.

Bedroom doors are fitted with alarms that alert staff when children leave their bedroom at night. These are used for all children, not only when there are identified risks. The use of alarms is not included in children's risk plans and children's placing authority social workers have not given agreement for their use. This limits children's privacy in the home. When safeguarding concerns have been identified, shortfalls in staff practice have led to door alarms not being used effectively to identify significant safeguarding concerns in relations between children. A requirement in relation to this was raised at the last inspection and has been restated.

Leaders and managers do not have adequate oversight of incidents when staff need to hold children to keep them safe. Records lack detail about the holds used and debriefs with the child have been carried out by the staff involved in the intervention. This reduces oversight of the intervention by someone who was not involved and limits opportunities for managers to review and evaluate practice effectively.

Significant recording shortfalls have resulted in a lack of information about children's experiences and incidents in the home. Leaders and managers were unable to find relevant information about an allegation and other incidents in the home and were unable to identify if appropriate action had been taken to address concerns. This significantly reduces opportunities to ensure that children are cared for safely or to identify any patterns or learning to improve practice in the home. A requirement regarding recording shortfalls was made at the last inspection and has been restated.

Serious incidents have not been notified to Ofsted as required by regulation. This limits the regulator's oversight of practice in the home to ensure that children are safe.

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

Inadequate leadership and management arrangements in the home have had a detrimental impact on the quality of the care provided to children. There have been a number of management changes since the last inspection. The manager and deputy manager are currently not in work, the responsible individual has recently left the authority and there have been changes to the senior leadership team. These changes have led to inconsistency and a lack of oversight of practice in the home.

This is something that the Interim Head of Service is taking proactive action to address.

Internal and external monitoring systems are ineffective. Shortfalls around staff practice and poor-quality recording do not promote consistent practice and have left children and staff at risk of harm. In addition, the quality of care report has not been completed or sent to the regulator. This reduces opportunities to review and develop practice in the home.

The quality of supervision arrangements for staff is varied. Senior residential staff are carrying out supervision sessions with some of the care staff and records viewed were good, however, records for other staff could not be found. This reduces opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and identify any learning opportunities.

## 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— 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>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(b)(d))</p>	<p>16 June 2024</p>
<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 promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	<p>16 June 2024</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> <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;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(ii)(h))</p>	
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child’s parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that children only move into the home when their needs can be met safely alongside the needs of other children living in the home and that all children are supported to have positive experiences of moving into and on from the home.</p>	<p>16 June 2024</p>

28 June 2024

The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—  
that staff—

help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans;

support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study;

understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;

help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;

promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;

maintain regular contact with each child’s education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child’s education and training and to maximise the child’s achievement;

raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child’s education or training provider and the child’s placing authority;

help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;

help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment;

help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans; and



<p>that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's daily routines encourage and promote their engagement in education.</p>	
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</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)(d))</p> <p>Leaders and managers must ensure the use of surveillance is regularly reviewed in the home for all children. Specifically, leaders and managers must ensure that systems in place are fit for purpose and that the home does not operate a blanket approach for all children.</p> <p>This was a requirement at the last inspection and has been restated.</p>	16 June 2024
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>Specifically, leaders and managers should ensure that all children have up-to-date plans and that each child's records are completed and maintained to a good standard.</p> <p>This was a requirement at the last inspection and has been restated.</p>	28 June 2024
<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>	28 June 2024

<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>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>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)(iv))</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>the quality of care provided for children;</p>	<p>28 June 2024</p>

<p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children’s home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and</p> <p>make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))</p>	
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are supported to develop and maintain positive relationships with each other and with all staff working in the home.</p>	<p>28 June 2024</p>

<p>The children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>develop positive relationships with them;</p> <p>engage with them; and</p> <p>take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure children’s views, especially about moving into or out of the home, are listened to.</p>	<p>28 June 2024</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and</p> <p>have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff receive supervision in line with the organisation’s supervision policy.</p>	<p>28 June 2024</p>

\*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## 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:** 1263766

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Tameside One, Market Place, Ashton-under-Lyne  
OL6 6BH

**Responsible individual:** Tammy Sutherland

**Registered manager:** Daniel Blackburn

## Inspector

Colin Jones, Social Care Inspector

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