

SC040500

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure children's home

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

The home can care for up to 27 children aged between 10 and 18 years. All places available at the home are commissioned on a contractual basis by the Youth Custody Service. The admission of any child aged under 13 years under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 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 has been registered with Ofsted since 2023.

There were 22 children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

Inspection date: 3 September 2024

Date of last inspection: 6 February 2024

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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’.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children during this assurance inspection.

Children said that they have positive experiences and enjoy living at this home. The atmosphere is mostly calm, and children have good relationships with the staff and have developed friendships with their peer group. This promotes an environment where children feel well cared for, which enables them to make sustained progress.

Children are well supported, and staff understand each child's presenting and complex needs. The quality of care is strengthened by the offence-related work and the range of interventions that help and prepare children to move on with their lives. Children's records are child-centred and clearly demonstrate their progress and achievements.

Children said that they get on well with staff, with one child jokingly saying, 'Staff aren't bad at all; we have competitions and tournaments and we beat them.' Children enjoy a range of activities, such as table tennis, football, pool and baking, and the chess club has enjoyed a revival. Children's opinions and views are welcomed, and this contributes to having their voice heard and acted on.

Leaders and managers work in partnership with other professionals and services to assist in the admission process. This ensures that children are well matched with the other children in their identified living area. Children are welcomed warmly when they first arrive, and this helps them to settle quickly. Likewise, there is a strong escalation process when move on plans are not being progressed for children. Staff ensure that children are well supported when they leave, and this support continues in the community.

Leaders and managers demonstrate greater accountability and oversight at all levels. Auditing and quality assurance processes ensure consistency in approach, and independent scrutiny provides that additional layer of accountability. This provides assurance that children are safe and any shortfalls are identified and acted on.

The need to physically restrain children to manage their behaviour has reduced significantly. When physical restraint is used, it is proportionate and in accordance with approved holds. Equally, single separation, where children are locked into an area alone, and managing away, where children are locked into an area with staff present, are short in duration. This means that children's freedom of movement and liberty are not unduly compromised.

Much emphasis and training have been given to ensuring that all staff are confident and competent in their understanding of the legal framework in the use of single separation and managing away. Monthly 'house team days' and individual supervisions are used to reflect on practice. This improves the quality of care, and staff are more competent in delivering trauma-informed care.

The multi-disciplinary team includes care, education and health staff, and it works holistically to meet the diverse needs of the children. This trauma- and offence-led approach is facilitated through monthly formulation meetings. This ensures that children receive individualised care and consistency in approach.

The requirement and the three recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. The education recommendation will be reviewed at the next full inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/02/2024	Full	Good
13/12/2022	Full	Good
18/01/2022	Full	Good
03/08/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

What does the secure children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Leaders should use the full breadth of information about children's starting points to set precise learning targets for the children. Leaders should further improve the ambition of the curriculum in English and art. Leaders should improve the quality of support for core subjects in the residential units. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC040500

Provision sub-type: Secure Unit

Registered provider: Salford City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Chorley Road, Swinton, Manchester
M27 5DA

Responsible individual: Sayma Khan

Registered manager: Kay Davidson

Inspectors

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector
Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Birtwhistle, Social Care Inspector

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