

# Barton Moss Secure Care Centre

Registered provider name: Salford City Council

Registered provider address: Barton Moss Road, Eccles, Manchester M30 7RL

Full 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 2025. There were 22 children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

### Inspection dates: 11 to 13 November 2025

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

Children's education and learning requires improvement to be good

Children's health good

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

The secure children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 10 December 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 10/12/2024      | Full            | Good                 |
| 06/02/2024      | Full            | Good                 |
| 13/12/2022      | Full            | Good                 |
| 18/01/2022      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children spoke positively about the support that they receive from staff and said that they like living in the home. Relationships between staff and children are built on mutual trust and respect. Children benefit from a stable and consistent staff team. This helps them to feel safe and secure in their home.

Children's families were complimentary about the care and support that their children receive. Those spoken to said that staff know their children well and that communication was good. One parent said, 'Staff are genuinely loving, caring and very patient with my son. They couldn't do anymore for him.'

Staff engage children in direct sessions that are responsive to their individual needs. Staff are enthusiastic about recognising and celebrating children's progress, consistently praising them for their achievements. This approach helps children to develop emotional resilience, self-confidence and independence. Children know that their views and opinions are important because staff ensure that they have a meaningful say in their meetings and that their views are appropriately reflected in their care plans.

Release on temporary licence (RoTL) is successful across the home, with eligible children responding positively to their plans. Children value these experiences and the opportunity to integrate back into the community. For example, some children made benches in their woodwork classes and were able to donate these in person to a local football club. This gave them an insight into how their efforts and achievements were appreciated.

There is a focus on helping children to prepare for their futures, either in other secure settings or in the community. For example, for some children, this led to them 'pitching' a business venture to staff to offer a shoe cleaning service and donating some of their earnings to charity. The support and encouragement from staff in this circumstance helped the children's ideas to become a reality and gave them confidence in their skills and abilities.

Staff understand children's individual communication needs and create a supportive environment to minimise barriers. They use clear and simple language and visual aids to ensure that every child has a voice and can express themselves. Staff also use a range of translation services to communicate effectively with children who speak English as an additional language.

Children are supported to continue to practise their chosen religion if this is what they want to do. They can enjoy religious celebrations and spend time with religious leaders. Children have opportunities to learn more about the beliefs and affiliations of others, and this helps them to understand and appreciate cultural differences.

## **Children's education and learning: requires improvement to be good**

Staff assess children's existing knowledge and skills on their arrival at the home. They are fully aware of which children have education, health and care (EHC) plans and/or speak English as an additional language. However, teaching staff, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics, do not use this information well enough to plan the curriculum to meet children's individual needs. In some instances, lessons are not well structured and do not have a clear purpose. This does not help children to engage in learning and is a missed opportunity to support children's progress in these essential areas.

Teachers work closely with teaching assistants to direct them on how to support children effectively in lessons. However, teaching staff do not use assessments to routinely monitor children's progress in reading. Children's reading abilities are not sufficiently challenged to enable them to achieve their full potential. Leaders acknowledge the need to strengthen the reading curriculum to ensure that it supports children of all abilities in developing their reading skills further.

Children benefit from a broad curriculum. This helps them to develop new vocational knowledge and skills that link to potential future career opportunities in sectors such as construction and horticulture. Leaders and teachers support children to gain relevant, accredited qualifications across most subjects that will be useful in their next steps, including GCSE qualifications.

Leaders have developed a new approach to supporting children to understand the career pathways available to them. When possible, they link children's experiences while on RoTL and spending time in the community to the jobs they would like to do in the future, for example construction work. However, it is too soon to judge the effectiveness of this approach in providing children with the careers information and experiences that will help them to make informed choices about their next steps.

Children benefit from personal development programmes that include a sensitive approach to topics relating to the personal, social, health and economic (PSHE) curriculum. They also take part in activities such as the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme. These programmes help children to develop wider life skills such as confidence, resilience, teamwork and problem-solving. Leaders have developed a well-planned weekly assemblies programme that reinforces what children learn in PSHE. Children often attend these sessions collectively, demonstrating high levels of social skills and tolerance of others.

Children have positive relationships with staff and show high levels of respect to everyone they meet. Children express their views and opinions politely and articulately and take part in constructive debates in lessons. Children say that they feel safe and appreciate the support they receive.

Leaders continue to develop enhanced quality assurance and improvement arrangements to oversee the quality of education and children's progress and to action identified

weaknesses. These arrangements are in their infancy, and it is too soon to see their impact. For example, the recommendation raised at the last inspection relating to the planning of mathematics lessons based on children's starting points has not been fully addressed.

### **Children's health: good**

Children benefit from quick and easy access to effective health and well-being services. When they arrive at the home, children receive a comprehensive and sensitive assessment covering all their healthcare needs. This ensures that staff better understand children's individual health needs and how to collectively meet them. Children also benefit from speech and language and occupational therapy screening to support their progress.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the healthcare team members, who work flexibly to build supportive connections with children. They approach children with kindness, compassion and respect and use their skills and experience to understand each child's story. Through careful psychological formulation that underpins the trauma-informed approach and therapeutic parenting model used in the home, the healthcare team provides bespoke services that reflect children's individual needs and circumstances.

Collaborative working with staff is a strength of the home. The effective and timely sharing of health information through regular multi-disciplinary meetings supports the ongoing review of each child's needs and risks. This enables the healthcare team to provide children with high-quality, individualised care.

The healthcare team, including the psychology team, reviews incidents and sees children following physical restraint, single separation and managed-away incidents. This helps to ensure that children receive appropriate support when they need it most and at times of increased distress.

The administration and management of medication are appropriate. Discrepancies are dealt with appropriately, and if these do occur, care staff are required to repeat competency training before being allowed to administer medication again. Nevertheless, medication audits involve randomly selecting two children in receipt of medicine. There is no system in place to share any findings from these audits formally or to follow up on any actions identified.

Children with neurodiverse needs, including those with diagnosed autism or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder, are well understood. Adjustments are made according to individual needs during one-to-one sessions with healthcare professionals and staff from the intervention team.

Healthcare staff receive regular clinical supervision, with numerous opportunities for informal discussions. They complete mandatory training as required, as well as additional

training opportunities. This ensures that healthcare staff have the skills and knowledge to meet children's needs.

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

A restorative justice approach is used effectively to support both children and staff to reflect on and learn from incidents. Children are helped to express their feelings and learn how to acknowledge the perspectives of others. This approach helps them to develop a deeper understanding of how their behaviour affects those around them and to take accountability for their actions. These are essential skills that contribute to their personal growth and development.

Safeguarding incidents are managed well. When there are shortfalls in staff practice, managers respond promptly and appropriately. They ensure that staff are supported to reflect on and learn from incidents. Retraining is provided if needed, and when necessary, disciplinary action is taken. This commitment to reflective practice promotes continuous improvement in the quality and safety of care provided to children.

Staff help children to manage their emotions through a range of de-escalation techniques. At times when children need to be held, they are only held in accordance with legal requirements. Incidents of physical restraint are reviewed by managers using CCTV footage, with the additional external oversight from the local authority designated officer. When any practice issues are identified, staff are supported to reflect, learn and make improvements for future practice.

Restrictive practices, such as single separation and 'managed away', are only used when necessary to protect the safety of the child or others. When these measures are used, children are supported to understand the purpose of the plan and the specific steps required to safely rejoin the group. The use of such measures is time-limited and clear. Supportive 'moving-on' plans are in place to help children understand what is expected of them and to promote a smooth and safe reintegration into the group.

The influence of the intervention team members, who work with children around their offences and behaviours, is unmistakable throughout the home. They know the children exceptionally well. Members of this team work closely with children to help them understand their perceived risks and the reasons why adults may be concerned for their safety. Children's interventions address emerging risks in the home, as well as those associated with children's offences and the risks that may be present in the wider community. Part of the intervention team's role is preparing children for their next steps. One child shared, 'They have really helped me, helping to sort out me going to live back with my family.'

Children's traditional risk assessments have been replaced by 'my positive pathway plans'. These child-friendly, holistic plans address needs across care, education and health. They provide clear evidence of progress and demonstrate that children are thriving while incidents are reducing. Furthermore, these plans are co-produced with the children, reflecting a culture of nurture and genuine care for children's safety.

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

The registered manager consistently places the children's best interests at the centre of all decisions about the home, and this ethos is disseminated into staff practice to continually achieve positive outcomes for children. Staff recognise his dedication and praise his commitment to his role and to the home.

The home's leadership team has clear development plans in place, with a focus on further improving the quality of care and experiences for children. Training goes beyond mandatory learning, and staff receive additional training to meet children's individual needs. Recent restorative justice training has been particularly successful. Staff are now better skilled to support children in understanding how incidents make everyone feel from different perspectives, helping to build empathy and encouraging children to take accountability for their actions.

The manager has a clear understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and uses effective monitoring tools to highlight areas for improvement. To further strengthen oversight, he dedicates time each day to spend with the children and to listen to their views. Children said that they appreciate the time they spend with the manager. When they make suggestions, he responds and acts where appropriate. One child said about the manager, 'He really listens to everything we say. We wanted free weights in gym and now we're now allowed to use them.'

Leaders and managers across the home advocate well for children. Leaders confidently challenge decisions when these are not in children's best interests or are detrimental to their progress. This continued support and encouragement promotes children's confidence and gives them a feeling of inclusion and self-worth.

Supervision sessions are reflective of the children's needs and progress and of staff's practice. These give staff the opportunity to discuss their developmental needs. An action plan is included in each supervision and reviewed at the next session. However, some managers delivering these sessions comment that formal training in this area would support their learning and development and help to ensure that supervisors can support staff effectively, confidently and consistently.

## 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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans.<br/>(Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that English and mathematics teachers use children’s individual starting points, including EHC plan outcomes where appropriate, to plan and sequence learning that is ambitious and tailored to their needs.</p> | <p>5 January 2026</p> |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children benefit from a well-structured reading programme that helps children of all abilities to develop their reading skills further. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that medication audits include a clear process for sharing any findings and following up on required actions. This process should be formalised so that clear lines of accountability for any medication errors are established. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff who deliver supervision have the appropriate skills and experience. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.2)

## **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:** 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:** Lee Matthews

## Inspectors

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

Jo Birtwhistle, Social Care Inspector

Gary Turney, Social Care Inspector

Suzanne Wainright, His Majesty's Inspector, Further Education and Skills

Andrea Crosby-Josephs, Children's Services Inspector, Care Quality Commission

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