

# 2629335

Registered provider: Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to two children who may have experienced social and emotional difficulties.

The home has been without a registered manager since December 2021. A manager was appointed in January 2022 but did not apply to register with Ofsted. A new manager is now in post and has submitted an application to register.

### Inspection dates: 25 and 26 January 2023

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected      good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers      good

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

**Date of last inspection:** 20 July 2021

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/07/2021	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children benefit from the strong and well-established relationships that they have with staff. These help the children to trust the adults who are caring for them. As a result, children welcome the support and care that they receive. This is instrumental in the progress that the children make.

Children make good progress in all areas of their development. With the support and guidance of staff, they attend school regularly and are proud of their achievements. Children enjoy good physical and emotional health, and can access the services that they need when required.

Before children move in to the home, they have the opportunity to meet staff, visit the home and take part in activities. This gives children a real sense of having a choice about their own lives. They know where they are going to live and can begin to build relationships with the staff who will care for them. Staff understand that leaving the home can be difficult for children. When children are ready to move on, staff arrange leaving parties to celebrate children's achievements. Staff prepare memory books that capture all the positive events and successes that the children enjoy while living at the home.

Children live in a welcoming and comfortable environment. The home is maintained and furnished to a good standard. Children make decisions about the decoration and are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms. This gives children a sense of personal identity.

The children respond positively to the happy and relaxed atmosphere in the home. Staff have calm conversations and discussions with children about daily life and, where required, matters of importance. Children have access to advocates, participate in regular house meetings, and are supported to attend their care planning reviews. Consultation and listening to children's views are central to the day-to-day running of the home.

Children enjoy a range of social and leisure activities. Staff support children to follow hobbies and develop new interests. These activities broaden the children's positive childhood experiences and help them to learn new social skills.

As children move from childhood towards adulthood, staff support them to learn independent living skills, including food shopping and using public transport, and to develop their emotional resilience. However, the local authority has not prepared formal pathway plans for the children. This undermines the positive work that the staff undertake in preparing children for moving on.

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

Staff know the children exceptionally well and they understand children's individual vulnerabilities and risks. Staff implement clear support strategies as set out in each child's written care plan and risk assessment. These strategies help staff to manage and reduce risks to children's safety and protect them from harm.

Children respond well to the nurturing, child-focused care and support from staff and the clear rules and boundaries in place. The staff continually reinforce positive behaviour, giving praise and recognising each child's achievements. After incidents, when children have been in crisis, staff use key-work sessions to hold reflective discussions. This approach helps children to develop the skills to better manage their frustrations.

There have been no instances when children have been missing from the home since the last inspection. However, staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in these circumstances and of the protocols in place to quickly locate children and help them to return safely to the home.

Staff are clear on the action to take in the event of an allegation being made. Immediate action is taken to keep children safe. The manager refers matters directly to the local authority designated officer. This helps to ensure a well-coordinated approach to potential investigations.

Leaders and managers complete safer recruitment checks for all staff working at the home. This helps to ensure that staff working with the children are suitable.

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

The home is currently without a registered manager. The current manager is in the process of applying to register.

The manager has quickly gained a strong understanding and oversight of the home. She is aware of the home's strengths and areas for development. She leads by example and provides staff with clear guidance on their roles and responsibilities. As a result, staff remain committed to caring for the children and there is a positive shared ethos across the service. An experienced staff team provides consistent care to the children. The staff say that they work in a team that is 'very supportive' and that the manager is 'approachable and understanding'.

The staff undertake induction and mandatory training, which includes courses in safeguarding, first aid, medication, and behaviour management. They receive more-specialist training in areas such as child trauma and criminal and sexual exploitation. Nevertheless, there has been a missed opportunity to provide training in autism. This would ensure that staff have a well-rounded knowledge and skills base to meet the needs of the children in their care.

Communication is effective, with staff having daily shift handovers and regular team meetings. In addition, staff have reflective meetings with the clinical support team. These meetings, along with regular formal supervision sessions, provide staff with guidance and support that help them to provide consistently good care to the children.

There is good partnership working with professionals. The manager and the staff promote positive communication with the children and their families. This supports effective care planning for the children.

The manager uses comprehensive internal and external monitoring systems to review the quality of care for children. Children's case files are maintained to a high standard, and the records are well organised. The manager ensures that these files include all necessary documents to help the staff to support and care for the children.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve? Recommendations**

- The registered person should work with the placing authority to ensure that each child's transition is planned. In particular, children should have a clear and detailed pathway plan. This should be in place to ensure that staff can support and prepare the child for their future, with the independent life skills and emotional resilience required for moving on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 57, paragraph 11.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs. In particular, staff should receive specialist training that will equip them with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the children in their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.11)

## **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:** 2629335

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

**Registered provider:** Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Rebecca Wall

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## **Inspector**

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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