

1223201

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to four children. The home provides multi-systemic therapy using the Family Integrated Transitions Model. Placements are for up to 12 weeks. The staff deliver an intensive dialectical behaviour therapy programme. The manager registered in October 2018.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 3 April 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/04/2019	Full	Good
14/08/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
06/06/2018	Full	Outstanding
01/11/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make significant progress in the limited time they have at this home. The implementation of the in-house structured therapeutic programme underpins the progress that children make. As a result, children are better prepared to move on from the home to live with their new carers.

Children have trusted and secure relationships with the adults who look after them. Staff are quick to form these relationships which help children to adapt and accept the care and help on offer. The quality of these relationships is fundamental to the progress children make. One child told the inspector, 'Staff are caring, thoughtful, and considerate. They've helped me through my ups and downs.' This is testament to the help the child has received.

Staff provide children with consistent care and reassurance. Children are empowered through frequent consultation to have a voice that is listened to and, at every opportunity, influences the care and support they receive. The children build personal resilience as a result of the exceptional care from the staff. Children live in a vibrant and fun house where they have developed a sense of security because of the open culture staff have created.

Because of the perseverance of staff, the children's health and educational needs improve. Children can access specialised services such as the substance misuse and sexual health services. The established links staff have with other agencies enable children to have the health support they need.

When children do not receive the education they are entitled to, managers are quick to respond and challenge schools. This ensures that the children's right to an education is upheld. A professional from the virtual school told the inspector, 'They are strong advocates for children's educational needs. We appreciate how caring they are. They want to achieve the best for the children.'

Children receive extensive support with their social and emotional health needs. They engage in reviewing and setting their own goals and staff are careful to break down the goals into realistic steps, with children's achievements constantly being recognised. The therapeutic programme empowers staff to help children to build self-esteem, confidence, resilience and empathy. This is exceptional given some of the children's starting points when they first arrive at the home.

The home is tastefully decorated and provides children with a comfortable living space. Children bring their own belongings to help personalise their bedrooms. Motivational quotes are displayed throughout the home. This all helps to create a relaxing and homely atmosphere for children to live in.

Children have a wide variety of opportunities to take part in fun experiences. Most importantly, children have their personal interests supported. One child was able to take part in football training with a team. Previously, this had been an unrealistic achievement.

Significant importance is given to the care planning for children throughout their stay at the home. Staff, social workers and prospective new carers, in consultation with the child, create individualised transition plans. This helps children to adapt as they prepare to live with their new carers and ensures that children have continuity of care throughout their transition to their new home and beyond.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

The staff provide vital support for children and their prospective carers. Children are helped to learn new skills to equip them to manage their own crises in the future. Staff make a significant impact on the children's lives to help them prepare to move to their new home.

Children say they feel safe and are protected living at this home. Incidents, such as child sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol misuse, violence and aggression, and missing from home episodes, have reduced or ceased for some children. As a result of living at this home, children are better equipped to recognise risk and make safer decisions.

The exceptional use of restorative practice and dialectical behaviour therapy supports children to reflect on their behaviour. Children are not made to feel ashamed about their actions, but supported to talk things through. Staff reduce the risk of children further internalising difficult emotions by addressing issues as they emerge. One member of staff described the intervention as, 'We expose behaviours, so children understand why it occurs. We help them to work things out.'

Staff have an excellent understanding of the risks associated with each child. The risk assessments are of a high quality and provide staff with clear direction and strategies to reduce the risk of harm for children. Risk assessments are updated in response to any incident that occurs. The oversight of managers ensures that staff always have up-to-date plans in place. This reduces the risk of harm to children.

Children experience excellent care because of the consistency of staff practice. Children benefit immensely from the detailed and structured daily plans. They know what to expect and that staff will be there to help them throughout their day. This helps children have emotional security in knowing that staff are there for them.

Concerns for children's safety are responded to quickly. The staff have excellent collaborative working relationships with social workers, the police and other safeguarding agencies. As result, children are better protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager provides outstanding leadership to the team. Staff have high levels of support and they thoroughly enjoy coming to work. The manager has created a culture within the team which is characterised by high aspirations for children. Staff are supported effectively and have a shared awareness about the children's needs. As a result, children's day-to-day care is delivered in a consistent way by the whole team.

Care planning for children is informed by the exceptional insight managers and staff have about the children's needs. When other agencies have been less knowledgeable about how to help a child, managers and staff have supported them to have a better understanding. This has helped replicate the strategies that work with children in their new home, giving them a greater chance to succeed in other settings.

Children's case records are well organised and completed to a high standard. Records from a variety of support sessions provide children with a reflective account of their progress and achievements. The style and clarity of recordings mean that children have an increased understanding about their time living in the home.

Managers lead by example and role model the importance of always being available to talk things through. This practice, in turn, is used by staff who help children in the same way. The supportive culture managers have created ensures that children and staff have in place the help and guidance they need.

Staff learn through an extensive and varied training programme that includes regular dialogue with a specialised therapeutic consultant. This provides staff with the skills and knowledge they need to effectively care for the children.

The internal and external monitoring system provides scrutiny and evaluation about the quality of care provided to children. However, the independent visitor does not always visit the home at a time when the children will be available. In addition, the manager has not yet established a consultation process with parents and professionals. Not capturing the voice of children and relevant others may limit the further progress that children make.

Sound and comprehensive recruitment procedures underpin the employment of new staff. Managers involve children in the recruitment process, which helps them to evaluate the values and integrity of prospective new workers.

The manager and staff team are highly valued by their fellow professionals. Feedback to the inspector consistently recognised the manager's and staff's impact on the children's lives. Feedback to the inspector consistently highlighted the team's child-centred practice. A professional from a partner agency told the inspector, 'They really do look to achieve the best for the children.'

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

Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that consultation with children, families, social workers, and other relevant professionals occurs as part of the quality-of-care review. The register manager should also ensure that the views and opinions of the afore mentioned people are captured after children are discharged from the home, to help evaluate the impact the intervention has had on the lives of the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- The registered manager should ensure that the independent person visits the home when the children are most likely to be available to speak with. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

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: 1223201

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Registered provider address: Leeds City Council, Civic Hall, Calverley Street,
Leeds LS1 1UR

Responsible individual: Joel Hanna

Registered manager: Ben Attfield

Inspector

Aaron Mcloughlin, Social Care Inspector

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