

1277079

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate up to two children or young people who may have emotional, behavioural and/or learning difficulties. It is owned by a private organisation.

The manager was registered in April 2018.

Visit dates: 9 to 10 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 16 October 2018

Previous inspection judgement: Good

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

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

The care of children

Young people are well cared for and they experience stable placements. Staff have established trusted relationships with the children and young people. This has helped them to make progress in their lives relative to their time in placement.

Staff work collaboratively with all professionals to ensure that the children and young people's needs are being met. Early intervention has helped them to overcome past trauma, such as loss and rejection. As a result, the children and young people are better able to manage their emotions and make positive choices.

Transitions into and out of the home are highly individualised and well planned. Much emphasis is placed on listening to the children and young people and on ensuring that their voice is heard. As a result, children and young people have settled down well in their new environment.

Staff have worked alongside education providers to minimise disruption to learning during the pandemic. The young people continued with their studies with a combination of home schooling and on-site attendance. This enabled two young people to complete final examinations and start college.

Through regular discussions with the children and young people there was a gradual acceptance of, and adherence to, the COVID-19 restrictions. One young person said that they regularly clapped for the NHS, and that they completed an online course on health and safety.

Creative measures were put in place to help the children and young people stay in touch with their families and friends. As lockdown restrictions relaxed, the children and young people were quick to establish face-to-face contact, subject to close monitoring and supervision.

The safety of children

The safety and protection of the children and young people are given high priority. Risk assessments and personal support plans are completed with the child or young person. This helps them to identify their needs and understand the consequences of their risk-taking behaviour. The children and young people are better informed and able to be more accountable for their own safety and well-being.

Staff are proactive and highly responsive when children and young people go missing or do not return home on time. Staff are aware of the procedures for notifying and reporting incidents of children or young people going missing from the

home. Managing the children and young people's independence safely has been a mitigating factor in reducing incidents of children or young people going missing from the home.

Staff have continued to complete online training through a range of forums. This has, for example, included training on how to recognise and deal with self-harm, exploitation and contextual safeguarding. This training has further enhanced the staff's skills in responding to the complex needs of the children and young people.

Key-working discussions with children and young people have been a significant feature during lockdown. The COVID-19 pandemic has been an ongoing theme alongside such pertinent issues as the 'black lives matters' movement, staying safe in the community and the effects of alcohol and drug misuse.

Leaders and managers

The registered manager has run the home since it was first registered. She successfully manages two homes, assisted by an experienced deputy and well-established staff team. This core staff team provides consistent care to the children and young people, where they have been able to flourish and progress.

The manager is a visual presence within the home and has a very 'hands on' approach to running the home. The environment replicates a family home, having been recently decorated and adorned with pictures of the children and young people engaging in a range of activities. Children and young people have enjoyed trips to Alton Towers, Madame Tussauds and holidays on the coast.

The manager has been instrumental in revising recording tools, such as key-working and the outcome star document. This has not only assisted staff in their discussions with the children and young people but has evidenced greater participation and engagement.

The independent visitor has been a consistent individual since the home was first registered. Visits have continued remotely during lockdown, using technology to facilitate a visual presence. The manager has used both independent and internal monitoring systems to improve practice, set targets and action any recommendations.

Communication with external agencies and professionals has continued through virtual meetings and, on occasions, via social distancing. This has meant that plans for the children and young people have not been delayed. Independence work and planning for two young people have resulted in one young person successfully transitioning to semi-independent accommodation.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1277079

Registered provider: Inspire Social Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Inspire Social Care Services Ltd, 8 Victoria Street, Greetland, Halifax, Yorkshire HX4 8DF

Responsible individual: David Copping

Registered manager: Joanne O'Donnell

Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

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