

2542730

Registered provider: Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and runs this home. It provides care and accommodation for up to two children whose plan is to live in a medium-or long-term residential setting. The home was registered in September 2019.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 February 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress from their individual starting points. They live in a happy and homely environment that is alive with laughter and friendly banter. Staff are child centred and nurturing. These factors help the children to develop close and positive relationships with staff.

Staff are strong advocates of the benefits of education. Children are in full-time education, and they have aspirations to achieve their goals. For one child, a part-time job also helps them to plan for their future, and develop their independence. This will help them prepare for their future employment options.

Children lead healthy lifestyles. During the most restrictive periods of the COVID-19 pandemic, they stayed active by using the garden and going for walks. Staff educate children around healthy meal options and nutritious food choices, and they support them to attend medical appointments when required. This enables children to remain healthy.

Children's photograph albums show them enjoying life and making happy memories of their time in the home. These include activities in the home and in the local community. These opportunities help children to increase their confidence and to widen their social circles, learning new skills and developing their hobbies and interests.

Staff consult with children about the day-to-day running of the home and decisions about their care. This is done through children's meetings and regular key-work sessions. As a result, children are involved in decisions that directly concern them, and this makes them feel valued and respected.

Children are supported to embrace their cultural identity. Staff ensure that children can easily access food products and clothes that meet their cultural needs. Respect for their cultural heritage helps children to develop a sense of belonging.

Children develop independent living skills. They are learning to cook and budget, and to complete general household tasks. This ensures that they are able to live comfortably when they move from the home.

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

Staff regularly review and update children's risk assessments. However, these are not always accurate. One of these records contained information relating to another child. This is a breach of confidentiality and means that children may not receive personalised care to manage and reduce risks to their safety.

The manager works well with other professionals to ensure that they understand and meet the children's needs. However, for one child, the manager and staff did not ensure that the allocated social work team completed appropriate checks for known acquaintances. As a result, the child was able to spend time with individuals not assessed as suitable. This placed the child at risk of harm and does not promote the welfare and protection of children.

Staff use bedroom door alarms to monitor children's location in the home. There is no written consent from children's social workers to demonstrate that, for the purpose of safeguarding, they are aware of, or in agreement with, the use of this measure. The registered manager took some steps to rectify it during this inspection.

Staff respond to children's behaviour with clear boundaries. Staff encourage children to talk about their feelings and find new ways to manage their frustrations. With guidance from the local authority's emotional support and well-being team, staff develop strategies to help them to better manage children's behaviour. This means that children learn to better manage their emotions and anxieties. As a result, children live in a calm and settled environment.

Safer recruitment processes are effective. The manager ensures that employment checks, disclosure and baring service checks and previous employment references are scrutinised before staff work with children. This helps to reduce the risk of harm to the children.

Children start to learn how to keep themselves safe. This is because staff complete key-work sessions with children around a number of topics, including bullying, internet safety and safe relationships. This helps children to understand the potential risks to their safety and welfare.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is new in post and registered with Ofsted in January 2022. She is supported by an assistant manager. The staff team speak positively about the support they receive from the management team. The staff said that they were happy in their roles and described how they enjoy supporting children and celebrating their progress. This means that children are cared for by staff who appreciate and value them.

The manager has a good understanding of children's needs and progress. She has high aspirations for children to achieve their personal goals and ambitions. This ethos is central to the leadership of the home, and this is reflected in staff practice. As a result, children benefit from bespoke care and support that is based around their individual needs.

Staff receive consistent reflective supervision and access relevant training opportunities. Regular team meetings are used as a forum to share information and

ideas. This helps staff to develop their skills and improve the care provided to children.

The registered manager uses a range of tools to monitor the quality of care provided by the service. For example, she undertakes audits and daily observations of how staff support children. The manager utilises the regular feedback from the independent visitor to monitor staff practice and children's progress. This ensures that the manager develops a good understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for improvement.

Social workers, teachers and health professionals praised the good communication and dedication of staff. This ensures good partnership working, which enables children to receive the help they need.

What does the 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, 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
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that a child's care plans and risk assessments only include information relating to that child.	25 March 2022
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that staff work with social work teams to ensure that children's contact arrangements are appropriate and protect them from harm.	25 March 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person must gain consent in writing from the placing authority for the use of any monitoring or surveillance of children in accordance with regulation 24. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16 paragraph 3.16)

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: 2542730

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wakefield Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Bond Street, Wakefield, Yorkshire WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Cheryl Whitehouse

Registered manager: Laura Ellis

Inspector

Evelyn Chafota, Social Care Inspector

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