

2542730

Registered provider: Wakefield Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home registered in 2019 and is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to two children who experience social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager has been in post since the home registered. She registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Inspection dates: 10 and 11 October 2023

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	good
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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: 9 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2022	Full	Good
08/02/2022	Full	Good
22/01/2020	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children living at this home experience the very best of care from staff who are dedicated and want to make a difference for children. Children are making excellent progress in all areas of their lives. Children's progress is unhindered, and they are becoming more resilient.

Children receive a consistent and highly personalised approach to their care from the moment they arrive at the home. They develop strong bonds with staff who take time to get to know the children and understand what they need. One child described how staff never gave up on them. They feel that staff will always be there for them and because of this they feel more confident. Another child described staff as 'nice' and said that they trust them.

Children's education is prioritised. Staff ensure that children have firm foundations from which they can achieve their aspirations. Staff ensure that children who are not in education are quickly re-established in school. One child who had not attended school for several years has now started college and has aspirations for their future. Children develop confidence because staff believe in them.

Children are supported to lead a healthier lifestyle. Children are more active and understand their health needs. One child said, 'Staff believed me when I raised issues about having food intolerances.' The child has now received the specialist support they need and now understands how to manage their health well.

Research-informed practice supports how children are cared for. The manager explored how acupuncture can help children who suffer from anxiety and poor mental health. This has led to staff supporting one child to do their own research and understand why this may be beneficial to them. The child said, 'This has really helped me to reduce my anxiety.' Another child said that the staff support has led to them no longer feeling the need to self-harm.

Children are empowered to influence every aspect of their care, from their routine to how staff respond to them. Staff and managers use the learning from children's individual experiences to enhance children's day-to-day lives. Children are consulted in a way that helps them know they are being listened to.

The manager and the staff work hard to support the children to have positive experiences. They respond quickly to ensure that any issues are resolved quickly. When one child indicated they were unhappy living at the home, the manager took this seriously and put a variety of measures in place to help the child settle. When this did not work, they ensured that the child had a well-planned move out of the home which was in line with their wishes.

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

Children living at this home are safe. They experience high levels of stability and security. Children have confidence in their relationships with staff and know that staff will put them first. Children say they are confident that staff listen to them and act.

Children are learning to navigate life safely and successfully. One child, who was at high risk of being exploited, was helped to understand the risks and make changes that kept them safer. Staff used a wide range of activities to support the child's understanding and put a well-informed safety plan in place. Staff use their knowledge of the child to engage them in meaningful and open discussions, including online safety and grooming. The risk of exploitation for this child has significantly reduced.

There has been a significant and sustained reduction in the number of incidents in the home. Children are helped to become more self-aware and make changes in how they manage their emotional responses. One child has learned about why they react in a physical way towards others and their environment in times of anxiety. This insight has helped the child to develop better ways of expressing themselves. Another child who frequently became emotionally overwhelmed said they have never been able to remain calm at times of stress. However, they now recognise their own feelings and act before becoming overwhelmed.

The use of physical intervention is rare. Staff ensure that it is only ever used as a last resort and in line with children's plans. All staff are trained in the method of restraint used in the home. In addition, they receive regular refresher training to ensure that they have the skills and confidence to physically hold a child should the need arise.

Children rarely go missing from this home. When they do, they receive a well-coordinated response from staff and managers. Staff are persistent in searching for children. They use their established relationships with the children's family, the local authority and the police to ensure that children are quickly found and returned home safely. The manager ensures that children have independent interviews on their return home.

Children are learning tolerance and are living together in harmony. Restorative meetings are used by staff to help children to repair relationships that have broken down. On one occasion, a child made a complaint about a member of staff. The child and member of staff were supported to talk reflectively about their relationship. This led to a greater understanding of the child and how their past experiences affect them.

Children only move into the home when it is right for them and others who already live there. Following one child moving out, the manager recognised the need for the

remaining child to have a period of stability living on their own. The manager used her knowledge of the child to help leaders understand why this was the right plan. By allowing the child this time and space, staff were able to gain an exceptional understanding of the child and how to help them, before another child moved in. The child said, 'I have lived here over a year now. They (staff and the manager) have never given up on me.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The highly experienced manager demonstrates good leadership of the home. Staff have confidence in her. They feel well supported and confident in following her lead. The manager always holds the children in mind when making decisions that affect them.

This home uses a therapeutic model of care. You can see this in every aspect of the running of the home. The manager always seeks to look for innovative ideas on how children's experiences can be further enhanced. The introduction of coloured baskets is helping children to consider their own needs and prioritise them by choosing which basket they go in. This is helping children to focus their energies and not become overwhelmed.

The manager has a thorough understanding of the children's individual plans. These are highly individualised to reflect children's needs and risks. When children's needs change, the manager collaborates with the social worker and other professionals to ensure that plans are reviewed and updated. Plans remain relevant, which helps to improve children's outcomes.

There is a learning culture embedded in the home. Staff meetings are regular, well attended and are driving forward practice. For example, the manager regularly shares her findings from her evaluation of children's experiences and encourages staff reflection. Safeguarding is also regularly discussed. This ensures that staff's knowledge remains up to date. In addition, staff receive regular supervision that supports them to reflect on their own practice and the impact on the children.

While the manager has systems in place to help her have strong oversight of the home and children's progress, there has been a shortfall in her oversight of the records. The actions that staff have taken to safeguard children are not always evident in children's records, and the records are sometimes contradictory.

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, 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. The leadership and management standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that systems are in place that ensure effective management oversight of records relating to children who go missing.	2 January 2024

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 address: Wakefield Council, County Hall, Bond Street,
Wakefield WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Cheryl Whitehouse

Registered manager: Laura Ellis

Inspector

Rachel Walker, Social Care Inspector

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