

2542730

Registered provider: The Council of the City of Wakefield

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority. The home offers care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. Two children were living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 November 2024

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: 10 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/10/2023	Full	Outstanding
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

Since the last inspection, two children have moved out from the home, and two children were living in the home at the time of the inspection. The inspector spoke with three children, who talked about how staff were 'very caring'. One child said, 'It is the best place that I have ever lived.'

Staff are extremely committed to the children and enjoy spending quality time with them. Staff ensure that the children live in a fun and vibrant home. They created an additional lounge that proudly displays all the children's arts and crafts. The staff spoke passionately about the children and recognised and understood the significance of the children's past care experiences. The sensitive care offered by staff helps strengthen children's relationships and provides them with a strong sense of belonging. One child talked about not ever wanting to leave the home.

Children make significant progress relating to their health, emotional well-being and social development. Staff have a clear understanding of the children's needs and forge strong working relationships with all associated professionals. Staff work with emotional well-being services and use research-informed practice tools to assist the children's understanding of their emotions. All feedback from professionals said that the children have made exceptional progress because of the child-centred, nurturing care offered by staff.

Staff place great value on children's education and are aspirational for them. Staff work with education professionals to help the children overcome challenges. This is having a positive and sustained impact on the progress the children are making with their learning and social development. Children's attendance has improved, and they access support within their mainstream classroom. This has helped children's learning, and they are benefiting immensely from developing friendships from school.

The children benefit and enjoy the variety of activities that support their individual needs and strengthen family bonds. The children have fun playing in the garden and enjoy individual activities such as gymnastics and golf. Staff help the children have new experiences, and they supported them to attend a residential activity. These opportunities highlight the progress the children have made and allow them to have fun and develop relationships.

Children are supported to have positive moves out from the home. Staff work with other agencies to ensure that all children's needs are considered when they move on. Staff fully embrace celebrating children's achievements and provide them with positive and happy memories to reflect on. In addition, staff sensitively welcome children into the home. They plan imaginative ways to get to know the children, and

transitions are led by children's individual needs. This helps children develop trusting relationships and helps to reduce any anxieties.

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

Children feel safe because of the consistently nurturing care they receive from staff who they trust and can talk with. Staff have a broad understanding of children's needs and have meaningful discussions with them about difficult topics. This allows staff to offer the children sensitive support to understand any associated risks.

Children do not go missing from the home. The risks are reduced because of the homely environment offered. However, missing-from-home protocols are in place. Children's risk assessments are detailed and cover all associated risks. Children's plans offer staff an understanding of the actions that they should take to reduce harm for children.

Staff place great emphasis on using de-escalation skills, and positive parenting is embedded in the children's care. One child proudly explained how they earn stars and rewards to celebrate their achievements. Staff have physically held children as a last resort, to keep everyone safe. Staff and the manager have discussions with children after significant incidents. Additionally, the manager welcomes the additional independent oversight of specialist trainers. This means the staff constantly reflect on their practice and ensure that children's safety and well-being have the highest priority.

Children understand the complaints procedures and feel safe to confidently express their views. Children's concerns regarding staff practice are taken seriously, and actions are taken to address any concerns. The manager has effective links with the local authority designated officer. Staff know what actions that they should take if they have concerns regarding staff practice. Staff practice avoids harm to children.

The manager ensures that suitable fire equipment is stored in line with the home's fire procedures. This helps to ensure that the home remains homely. However, not all staff have immediate access to some equipment. Leaders and managers were confident that the home's layout adhered to health and safety requirements and reduced any potential risks. During the inspection, they also identified potential actions that they propose taking to address this matter.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is ambitious and aspirational for children and works with a deputy manager and staff team who are equally passionate. Feedback from professionals was extremely positive regarding the manager's strong desire to offer the children high-quality care. This support and the commitment from staff are helping the children make significant progress.

The manager understands the home and consistently uses monitoring and reviewing systems that provide effective management oversight. Additional tools are used by the deputy manager to support oversight of children's individual progress and the home's health and safety. These actions help to progress children's plans and are robust in improving children's quality of care.

All staff were extremely positive regarding the support they receive from leaders and managers. Staff feedback included comments that overwhelmingly suggest the home is a 'wonderful place to work' and that support from the manager is 'amazing'.

Staff receive regular supervision and timely development reviews that are highly reflective and child-centred. The manager uses tools to monitor patterns and trends of significant incidents, which are explored with staff in team meetings and supervisions. These approaches help to maintain high standards and ensure that the children have the best possible care.

Monthly team meetings are attended by staff and other professionals who support the children. Staff use team meetings to research and develop their understanding and skills in certain topics, for example children's attachment needs and the use of effective language. Staff integrate and embed their learning into practice. Furthermore, the quality of relationships between professionals and staff helps drive children's plans. This helps to ensure that the children receive the best possible care and experiences.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that when taking actions to promote a homely environment, that health and safety is assured, and that all staff have effective access to fire extinguishing equipment. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: The Council of the City of Wakefield

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

Responsible individual: Cheryl Whitehouse

Registered manager: Laura Ellis

Inspector

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

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