

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 and young people whose plan is to live in a medium- or long-term residential setting. The home was registered in September 2019 and the manager was registered with Ofsted at the same time.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: This is the home's first inspection.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The current children have lived at the home since its opening. The manager's careful planning ensures that the children are matched carefully and soon settle down and adapt to living together. Although the children only moved in a few months ago, staff encouragement has led to them spending less time in their bedrooms and more time with the staff and each other. This has resulted in the children developing good relationships with each other and the staff. As a consequence, their social skills have improved, and they flourish in a caring, family atmosphere at the home.

The children have made good progress since moving in, particularly in respect of their education. The staff team works with the children using educational materials, such as workbooks and journals, to improve their literacy. This is in addition to the daily visits from the home tutor. These positive experiences are enabling the children to gain confidence in their abilities and leave their negative experiences about school behind them. The children talk about their future aspirations and plans.

The children benefit from good emotional and practical day-to-day support and they respond well to clear routines linked to the amount of screen time they have. This has resulted in them developing better sleep patterns. The children receive consistency of care throughout the day and night. Staff rotas are child-centred and limit the number of staff changes. This maintains the calm and homely environment.

The children spend time chatting and going out with staff on activities, such as to the swimming pool. This time together helps the children to develop trust in the adults caring for them. The staff consult with the children so that children feel respected and listened to. Good key-work sessions with children lead to a greater understanding about important issues affecting their lives. This supports an open culture, with children reflecting on their own thoughts and feelings.

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

The children experience a good level of care and supervision from a staff team that understands their vulnerabilities. The staff make sure that they use appropriate safety measures and strategies to protect the children. This includes managing internet and mobile phone usage, alongside educating the children about the dangers of social media.

The staff take steps to stop children from going missing. This has led to a significant reduction in one child's missing episodes. There has only been one occasion when a child has been away from the home without permission and this was many months ago. Consequently, the children are at reduced risk of child exploitation.

There is good behaviour management in the home. The staff are consistent and use a restorative approach to encourage positive behaviour. The individual crisis management plans provide staff with clear guidance on how to manage potential negative behaviours.

The staff know the children well and notice subtle changes in their behaviour. This helps to pre-empt any physical outbursts as staff use effective individualised de-escalation techniques. There have been no occasions when staff have had to use physical intervention, and the children are learning to self-regulate their emotions.

The children are not known to have any substance misuse issues and are not involved in any criminal behaviours. Staff are knowledgeable about safeguarding issues through their regular training and ongoing discussions in their supervision sessions and team meetings. This keeps the staff informed and their knowledge regularly tested.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has many years of experience working in residential childcare. She has management oversight of another local authority home and manages her time effectively between the two. She is supported by an experienced assistant manager. Together, they make a strong management team and both have a child-centred approach.

The managers have set up and implemented new procedures and recording systems. The staff's recording is thorough and detailed, and documents are child-friendly. The managers complete regular monitoring and have good management oversight at the home.

The manager employs staff to provide children with an eclectic mix of people ranging in age, gender, skills and experience. Staff receive a detailed induction to the home and have plenty of time to get to know the policies and procedures. The staff had time to work together prior to the children moving in. This gave the manager time to develop the team, allowing them to work together cohesively. The managers and staff are all passionate about providing the best care to the children.

The staff receive a high level of support from the manager and from each other, making them a close-knit team. This helps them to be honest and transparent with each other. The focused supervision and regular team meetings promote reflection. The manager encourages professional development and shares research with the team to promote practice discussions. The manager is full of new ideas and leads by example. The staff regularly attend training, which has included a social care virtual reality experience to give the staff an insight from the children's perspective.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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, Yorkshire WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Mark Nevill

Registered manager: Samantha Walshaw

Inspector

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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