

# 2677302

Registered provider: North West Youth Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home registered in July 2022 and is operated by a private provider. The home provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties and/or have learning disabilities. There is currently one very young child living at the home.

There is currently no registered manager. An interim manager is in post until a suitable manager is recruited. A completed application has not yet been received.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 September 2023

**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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

**Date of last inspection:** 15 June 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** inadequate

### Enforcement action since last inspection:

A restriction of accommodation under section 22B of the Care Standards Act 2000 was imposed on 19 June 2023. This restriction was lifted on 12 September 2023.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 15/06/2023      | Full            | Inadequate                      |
| 27/02/2023      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The home provides a family-style environment. The child's artwork and belongings are observed throughout the home. The home is attractively decorated. The child's room is personalised to their taste. The gardens provide a safe environment for the child to play.

Staff provide high levels of physical and emotional warmth to the child. They offer regular praise and reassurance to the child, who has started to demonstrate compassion and empathy towards others.

The child is supported to spend meaningful and quality time with those important to them. The child is now able to spend time with family in the local community doing enjoyable activities, supported by staff. The parent spoke of how this has helped to make the time they spend with their child feel more natural. The child has also been supported to make a friend locally. The friend attended the child's birthday celebrations.

Staff use a trauma-informed approach to care for the child. They have all received training in this model of care. The approach is evident in all aspects of the child's care. Meetings are held regularly to discuss the child and their needs. This ensures the child receives care that evolves as their needs change.

The child is making progress in all aspects of their development. They are healthy and active. When health issues arise, the child is supported by staff to understand the importance of following medical advice, for example using treatments for minor ailments as directed.

The child is supported to develop their social skills by taking part in a wide range of activities alongside peers, such as drama class and dance. When the child expresses an interest in new activities, staff ensure that this is acted on.

The child is not currently attending school. Staff have been creative in how they have encouraged the child to learn. The manager has worked effectively with the virtual school and the local authority to ensure that the child's education plan is formalised and tutoring is made available, so the child does not fall behind.

Due to the restriction of accommodation, there have been no children moving in or out of the home since the last inspection. Staff's ability to ensure that children have positive transitions has not been fully assessed during this inspection. However, staff are now helping the child to prepare for sharing their home and the adults who care for them.

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

Risk assessments for the child are now reviewed regularly. The assessments tell staff what they need to know. Staff have a sound knowledge of the risks and what they need to do to keep the child safe.

Staff are helping the child to be more accepting and tolerant of others. When the child showed curiosity about a particular religion, staff worked with a local religious organisation to help the child learn more. Staff share their own personal experiences of faith appropriately with the child. Staff actively challenge discriminatory behaviour and help the child to be accepting of others.

Staff are attuned to the child's behavioural needs and know what works to reduce unwanted behaviours. Staff rarely have to physically intervene with the child because they recognise when a situation is escalating and take steps to help calm the child. Instances where physical interventions have been used are well managed. There are debriefs offered to staff and the child in a timely way, and the manager evaluates the information to ensure that lessons are learned.

Allegations are rare and are managed well when they do occur. When the child has made an allegation, staff have taken immediate steps to safeguard the child. Staff are clear about the procedure they need to follow and do so. The manager consults with the local authority designated officer where appropriate.

Leaders do not always follow safer recruitment practices. References were not sought for one staff member where concerns had previously been raised. This is not helping to keep children safe.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

There is no registered manager at this home. The previous manager left prior to registration. There are plans to recruit a new manager. The interim manager is committed to the home and will remain in post until a permanent manager is appointed. The interim manager is making the changes required and can demonstrate that progress is being made. New processes to improve staff practice and the leadership and management of the home are in place. However, there has not yet been enough time for these changes to be fully embedded.

The interim manager has not completed a quality of care review within the required timescales. This limits the manager's ability to fully understand how the child's experiences of living at this home are affecting their outcomes. This is a missed opportunity to identify further areas for development and drive forward change.

The systems in place to support the manager to monitor and review are not helping them to understand all aspects of the running of the home. For example, when children share their views, the manager is not always aware of whether these views

have been acted on. This does not help the manager understand how the child's views are influencing how they are cared for.

The interim manager acts as a strong advocate for the child. When they identify a drift in planning for the child by others, they are quick to challenge. For example, when funding to support the child's education was not being used effectively by the school, the manager escalated her concerns. However, this is not well documented on the child's records and does not help the child to understand what is being done to help them.

The child's records are improving and give a sense of the child's experiences living at the home. There are times when records, although factual, are written in a way that is not helpful to the child, for example recording explicitly the words the child has expressed when in distress. This could lead to the child feeling stigmatised, and this is not a child-focused approach.

A delay in notifying Ofsted about a safeguarding matter does not help the regulator to understand what steps the manager has taken to keep a child safe.

Staff say they are well supported by the interim manager. Team meetings are now regular. The therapist attends team meetings to help staff consider the child's needs and reflect on practice. Supervision is helping staff to understand their role better and gives them the opportunity to talk about personal and professional matters. Staff are becoming more resilient.

There have been no complaints made since the last inspection. There is a process in place to help the manager ensure that complaints are dealt with effectively and recorded.

## 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         |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> | 31 December 2023 |
| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that references are sought from employers when there have been conduct issues.</p>                                | 31 December 2023 |
| <p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p>                                                                                                                             | 31 December 2023 |

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").

The registered person must—

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.  
(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a) (5))

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children's records use child-centred language. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that when making safeguarding notifications, they do so without delay. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

## 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:** 2677302

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** North West Youth Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** North West Youth Services, Peine House, Hind Hill Street, Heywood OL10 1JZ

**Responsible individual:** William Mulvaney

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Rachel Walker, Social Care Inspector

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