

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC001531
Inspector	Simon Morley
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Catholic Care (Diocese of Leeds)
Registered person address	11 North Grange Road LEEDS LS6 2BR

Responsible individual	Carol Ann Hill
Registered manager	Kathleen Burrows
Date of last inspection	22/10/2013

Inspection date	11/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	adequate
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	adequate
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	adequate
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Leadership and management is not judged good as there are some weaknesses in practice that have not been identified or actioned. Some of these shortfalls have the potential to impact on the safety of children and young people. This is in part minimised by the levels children and young people are supervised and the current very low frequency the shortfalls occur. The areas of weakness have contributed to the overall effectiveness being judged as adequate.

Children and young people report feeling safe and well cared for. They have positive views about living in this home and progress they are making.

Staff build good quality relationships with children and young people. The staff team are effective at providing well planned and personalised care to meet children and young people's individual needs. This is enhanced by the new semi-independent flats. These provide an excellent resource for young people making the transition to adulthood.

Outcomes for children and young people are good across different aspects of their development, education and welfare.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a charitable organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven young people. The home provides care for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home includes two, one bedroom self-contained flats for young people preparing to live independently.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/10/2013	Interim	good progress
01/05/2013	Full	adequate
28/08/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress
30/05/2012	Full	inadequate

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure the children's home is conducted to so as to - (a) promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there; in particular ensure all risks to young people are adequately assessed and acted upon (Regulation 11 (1) (a))	31/10/2014
26 (2001)	ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to any person who works at the home in respect of the matters specified in Schedule 2 (Regulation 26 (3) (d))	31/10/2014
28	maintain in the home in respect of each child who is	31/10/2014

(2001)	accommodated a record in permanent form which includes the records specified in schedule 3 relating to that child. In particular details of any health needs. (Regulation 28 (1) (a))	
29 (2001)	maintain in the children's home the records specified in Schedule 4 (Regulation 29 (1))	31/10/2014
34 (2001)	ensure the system referred to in paragraph (1) shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities (Regulation 34 (3))	28/11/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure staff actively search for children who are missing (NMS 5.5)
- only provide admission to children whose assessed needs they can reasonably expect to meet. In particular ensure there are clear assessment and decision making processes for admissions (NMS 11.2)
- take action to address issues raised by monitoring. In particular make sure the system for recording use of physical intervention is fit for purpose. (NMS 21.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Children and young people benefit from living in a warm nurturing environment where all of their needs are met by the staff charged with their care. Children and young people develop a better understanding of their personal circumstances and reasons for being in care through life story work. Children and young people engage with therapeutic services to help build resilience and promote their emotional health and wellbeing.

Children and young people feel well cared for and make good relationships with staff. As a result of this emotional security, they achieve both socially and academically to a high level. They make good progress at school in comparison to their starting points on admission, are able to pass exams and progress into further education.

All children and young people enjoy good physical health which is actively promoted through a choice of leisure activities, balanced diets and healthy lifestyles. They learn to take responsibility for their health and risk taking behaviour such as smoking decreases.

Children and young people state they are happy and enjoy a variety of interests, hobbies and learn new skills. This includes cadets, karate, guitar lessons, after school clubs, playing pool, and using games consoles. In addition to this, children and young people regularly enjoy trips and activities further away from the local community.

Children and young people develop their social and independence skills well. They improve their self-care skills, learn to cook, shop, budget, travel independently and arrange their own appointments. As they get older, children and young people can now progress into newly built semi-independent flats that are part of the home. These individuals confidently and safely explore a greater level of independence developing their life skills further.

Children and young people learn to have caring relationships with each other, their friends and relatives. They make and sustain relationships with important others, which improves their sense of identity and social support networks.

Quality of care **good**

Staff and young people have developed positive and meaningful relationships which lead to young people feeling safe and cared for. Young people consistently report staff to be caring and concerned about their safety and welfare. This genuine concern for young people enables staff to develop a sense of trust in their

relationship with young people regardless of their individual needs.

Staff ensure the home is a warm, friendly and welcoming place for children and young people and for visitors that play an important role in their life. The diverse mix of staff ensures they are consistently able to provide good role models and develop effective caring relationships in order to meet the needs of all young people in the home. As a result, children and young people feel comfortable to be themselves, follow their own lifestyles and be involved with the overall running of the home.

Staff actively involve young people in the preparation for mealtimes. This is seen as family time with all the young people and carers at the dinner table together. Meals are prepared in accordance with the wishes and feelings of children and young people. Significant consideration is given to providing the young people with a healthy and balanced diet to meet their growing needs. There is flexibility for some sweet treats at the weekend that are not allowed during the week.

Staff have a good knowledge of the individual needs and behaviours of the young people. They effectively support young people to overcome barriers to making progress in all aspects of their life. This is done through embedding the importance of routines, school attendance and good behaviour. Staff utilise restorative justice practices and loss of privileges to reinforce this. These strategies support young people to be aware of the impact of their behaviours and consequences of their actions. This in turn prepares them for the reality of independence and adulthood. For example children and young people talk to each other about how they feel and apologise after they have fallen out.

Staff maintain good relationships with professionals from various disciplines including education and therapeutic services. They are able to draw on their skills and knowledge of interventions to support and appropriately challenge young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Some children and young people like to involve staff in their individual counselling sessions, which assists staff to have a good insight into their behaviour. This leads to more support being available to children and young people as they openly discuss and share their feelings. Staff use this insight to respond to children in a considered and thoughtful manner so they feel safe and secure.

Staff are also enthusiastic and consistent with supporting and celebrating the achievements of young people which in turn promotes school attendance. Staff explore future employment opportunities and potential for work experience within the local community with children and young people. They help them look for apprenticeships, go to college and apply for jobs. This helps young people with the transition from formal education to further education, employment and training. As a result children and young people gain more independence and a realistic insight of their futures.

Staff work closely with children and young people to identify relevant support groups

to assist in building networks in preparation for independence. There are good links with relatives and staff promote regular family contact.

The staff team are eager for young people to enjoy quality leisure activities and spend essential one-to-one time with them to promote their quality of life and enjoyment. This leads to the young people living in an environment that provides the young people with a sense of wellbeing and essentially enables them to flourish.

Keeping children and young people safe adequate

In-house care planning identifies risks to individual children and young people and protective factors are put in place to reduce risks and keep young people safe. Risk management is generally satisfactory and regularly reviewed to meet the needs of young people reflecting their age, progress and development. Risks relating to the impact of new children and young people moving into the home are not all suitably addressed. Likewise individual risks new children and young people may pose relating to their past experiences are not fully identified. This has the potential to compromise the effectiveness with which staff promote the welfare of all young people and keep them safe. This shortfall was minimised at the time of inspection due to the levels of staff supervision.

There have been only a few occasions when individual children and young people have been missing from the home. This has occurred three times since the last inspection, all recently in August. There are times when an individual may also come home late. Staff attempt to make telephone contact with missing young people, their friends and relatives to encourage them home. Staff regularly remind them that the home environment is always a safe place to return to. These incidents are also notified to the police and local authority and the manager works closely with these agencies to reduce risks to missing young people. However staff do not consistently search for missing individuals which impacts on how well they are effectively protecting children and young people's safety.

Despite these shortfalls young people say they feel safe and are able to take managed risks in other aspects of their lives as part of normal growth and development. For example, choosing how to spend their money, travel, responsibility for their own health appointments and driving lessons. Young people benefit from one-to-one time with staff where they are able to talk about issues relating to their personal safety. This builds up their knowledge of broader dangers, potential risks and encourages appropriate decision making.

Staff are aware of the potential for challenge and conflict in the home therefore work hard to counteract any negative behaviours and discourage play fighting in a bid to prevent any escalation. They effectively follow clear strategies from young people's care plans to keep a calm environment and divert young people from escalating confrontational scenarios. Staff are quick to address any form of bullying behaviour

such as name calling, negative remarks and manipulation between children and young people.

These pro-active approaches lead to children and young people developing good behaviour patterns. There is a relaxed, family-like environment. Using physical intervention as a means to manage behaviour has not had to be used for nearly a year and a half. While staff keep their training up to date the existing recording system is out of date should this be a necessary occurrence. This shortfall has minimal impact on children and young people as long as staff do not need to use physical intervention.

Staff know the safeguarding procedures in the home so that any concerns about a young person's safety are reported to the appropriate authorities. The manager ensures that significant events relating to the protection of young people are notified to the relevant safeguarding authorities. This contributes to the partnership working to safeguard and promote young people's welfare

The Registered Provider's recruitment practice in assessing and vetting new staff to work in the home is suitable. Although a number of background checks are also made on agency staff, on one occasion not all the required information was obtained prior to them starting work in the home. On this occasion this has not impacted on children and young people's safety.

Leadership and management

adequate

The Registered Manager has been in post for approximately 10 years; she is suitably qualified and experienced to manage this home. She is supported by a deputy and four senior carers who contribute to the day to day management arrangements.

The manager has a reasonable understanding of the strengths of the service but weaknesses are not always identified or sufficient action taken to address them. For example incomplete background records on admission and weaknesses in practice when young people are missing from the home. These and other shortfalls in the service identified throughout the report have not significantly impacted on the welfare of young people but do not reflect strong management practice either.

An independent visitor monitors the management of the home on a monthly basis and reports on the quality of care. These reports suitably evidence the standards of care, safety of young people and that their well-being is promoted. Monitoring by the Registered Manager is regular and has some analysis of how the setting improves outcomes for young people. The manager's quarterly monitoring reports do not evidence the how the views of parents and social workers influence care practice. There is evidence in day to day practice though of how young people's families and social workers are included in decisions about care and running of the home.

The Registered Manager is able to evidence progress young people make since admission to the home. She has developed a system for tracking their progress and outcomes across all aspects of their welfare. This shows the positive impact staff have on improving young people's life experiences. The Registered Provider has improved the service with a recently built extension which provides two self-contained one bedroomed flats for young people to move into. This is a very good feature of the home in promoting young people's independence prior to leaving care.

Staff understand the aims and objectives of the home in providing young people with a safe, stable environment in which they can build trusting relationships with adults, improve their emotional resilience and achieve well. This is reinforced through a suitable training programme which equips staff with core basic skills and knowledge. Staff have also attained the required qualification or are working towards it to ensure they are all able to fulfil their duties responsibly.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.