

SC001531

Registered provider: Catholic Care (Diocese of Leeds)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to seven children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties. This home is for single sex occupancy. At the time of the inspection, there were three children living at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2020.

Inspection dates: 31 October and 1 November 2022

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: 25 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/10/2021	Full	Outstanding
19/11/2019	Full	Good
10/12/2018	Full	Good
26/09/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children living at this home benefit from good structure, routines and clear boundaries. Staff are committed to providing children with a high standard of nurturing care. This provides children with a sense of security and stability which helps them to make progress.

The staff team shows great skill and tenacity in promoting and sustaining children's progression, with examples of highly creative approaches to meeting children's needs and ensuring the best possible outcomes for them. The progress that children make has a highly positive impact on their future life chances.

Children enjoy positive and trusting relationships with the adults who look after them. Staff have high aspirations for the children, they are proud of their achievements and want the best for them. This helps children to feel valued and to have a sense of belonging.

Children are making progress in their education in relation to their starting points. One child who was not attending education has returned to school since they moved into the home. Some children have faced barriers to their education, which has meant that some children have experienced short periods of exclusion from school. Nevertheless, staff advocate for children to help them to get the right support. This helps to ensure that any disruption to children's learning is addressed quickly and effectively.

Children are making progress in relation to their health. Where a health need is unmet, staff help children to access local health services for support such as smoking cessation or substance misuse. This proactive approach means that children are more likely to make better choices which help them to enjoy a healthy lifestyle.

Staff have meaningful discussions with children about a range of topics that are specific to the child's needs. However, the quality of these discussions is inconsistent. This is because, while at times child centred, the language used in some records is not helpful to the child. This does not give a true account of the discussions that have taken place.

Children do not always have access to all areas of the home. This relates to the pantry being routinely locked. The absence of a risk assessment has meant that this practice has not been under regular review. This practice does not provide children with a homely environment, and having a blanket approach means that there is an impact on all children living at the home.

When there has been damage caused to the decor or furniture, this has not always been repaired or replaced in a timely manner. The home was being redecorated at

the time of the inspection, but one child was unclear about the plans for their bedroom to be painted and refurnished.

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

The staff take their responsibility for keeping children safe very seriously. The safety and well-being of children is central to their practice. The staff are well informed and understand the vulnerabilities and risks to the individual children. They are clear about the steps they need to take to ensure that children are increasingly safe. This helps to ensure that children are consistently and effectively protected.

Staff respond well to children when they struggle to manage difficult feelings and emotions. This is because they understand how the children's experiences are having an impact on their behaviour. This means that staff are able to de-escalate incidents quickly and help children to develop better coping strategies.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities and understand the steps to follow when a child goes missing. For one child, the risk of them going missing has reduced since they moved into the home. This has meant that the risk of the child being exploited when they are in the community has reduced.

Staff talk to the children about risks, and they support them to develop ways to manage those risks. This has helped some children to make better choices, which has meant that they have become increasingly safe.

Risk assessments do not include all identified risks for some children. The steps for staff to follow to mitigate some of the risks to children are not always clear and easily understood. Lack of clarity in written documents has the potential to hinder the decisions staff make to ensure that children are better protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and suitably qualified. She has a good understanding of the children's needs and of the progress that they are making. She has a child-centred approach and models positive practice to the staff team. She is committed to ensuring that children receive a high standard of care that is unconditional, consistent and nurturing.

The manager instils a positive culture in her staff team. She is passionate about children, and she champions their needs effectively. She stimulates staff's enthusiasm and channels their efforts very effectively. Staff are consistently professionally managed, well supported and led. The manager has high expectations of staff and high aspirations for all children.

The manager values her staff and provides them with effective leadership and support. Staff said that they are happy and feel supported. This means that staff morale is good, and they are committed to wanting the best for the children.

The manager ensures that staff receive regular supervision that is reflective and provides them with the opportunity to discuss the children. Staff are provided with access to clinical supervision individually and in groups. This positive approach means that staff are better equipped to reflect on practice and to find the best strategies to support individual children. This leads to improved outcomes for children.

Staff undertake a wide range of training. Additionally, there are opportunities for further development through the learning pathways available to staff. Staff also benefit from regular team meetings and reflective discussions. These opportunities further enhance the skills and knowledge of the staff team.

There are audit and monitoring systems in place. Records show that the manager has oversight of the progress that the children are making. However, there are some shortfalls that have not been identified, such as the clarity of information provided in risk assessments and the language used by staff in some records.

Where door alarms are used to monitor the movement of children at night, the manager has failed to ensure that placing authorities have given consent in writing. The manager has not ensured that there is a system in place to regularly review this practice.

There are systems in place for the safe recruitment of staff, but recent changes made by the organisation have meant that the manager has not always had full oversight. This related to the procedure for verification of references. The manager was not able to provide the inspector with evidence that recruitment checks have been carried out for some staff employed through an agency. Therefore, the regulator could not be assured that reasonable steps had been taken to ensure that, full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2.

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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that written documents include all risks for children and that the steps for staff to follow are clear and easily understood.	12 December 2022
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b))	12 December 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. This should include ensuring that, when damage is caused to the decor and furniture, that it is repaired or replaced in a timely manner. Children's expectations about the decoration of their bedroom and the replacement of furniture should be managed by providing them with a timescale. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

- The registered person should ensure that any decision to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard a child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that child's individual needs, be properly recorded and kept under review. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15 paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that, as set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that the recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This includes ensuring that there are systems in place to record information in relation to the matters in schedule 2 when the required checks have been completed by a person other than the registered person. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC001531

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Catholic Care (Diocese of Leeds)

Registered provider address: 11 North Grange Road, Leeds LS6 2BR

Responsible individual: Carol Hill

Registered manager: Tracey Burke

Inspector

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector

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