

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	02/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC033657
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Leeds City Council
Registered person address	Leeds City Council, 3rd Floor, St George House, Great George Street, LEEDS, LS1 3DL

Responsible individual	Mr Stephen Walker
Manager	Jenny Thwaites
Inspector	Ms Nicola McEvinney

Inspection date	02/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC033657

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make good progress in all areas of their lives. Missing from home incidents and substance misuse have significantly reduced.
- Young people attend their education or training placement and some have undertaken exams.
- They enjoy positive relationships with the staff who provide a warm and nurturing environment.
- Young people have not been engaging in criminal activity which was a feature for some of them prior to their admission to this home.
- The staff work effectively with families and involve them in decisions affecting their children.
- Young people are gaining skills that are essential to make a successful transition to adulthood

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5)) In particular only admit young people within the stated age range and require a placement to prepare them for semi-independence.	01/08/2015
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16(1)) Schedule 1. 3(b) In particular be specific about the age range of the young people the home proposes to accommodate.	01/08/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is owned and managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2015	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
11/06/2014	Full	Good
20/01/2014	Interim	Inadequate Progress
21/08/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people make good progress in all areas of their lives. Some young people have lived at the home for a few years and have responded positively to the warm and nurturing care that is provided. They have excellent attendance at school and make good progress; they engage in projects around the home such as gardening. This enhances their confidence and self-esteem as well as them learning lifelong skills. Some young people have been admitted to the home following the closure of other homes within the authority. Their previous experience included regularly going missing, poor educational attendance, involvement in criminal activity and substance misuse. Since their admission young people have engaged with their education. One has sat exams and there is the expectation that one will commence an apprenticeship and the young person will start college. This has significantly impacted on their life opportunities. These young people say, 'Although it was fun, it is much better here; we have settled down, it is much better for us.' Youth justice workers commend the home saying, 'My young person was always in trouble with the police at his previous placement for offences in and around the home, however since going to (name of home) he has not committed any further offences. I feel this is the most settled I have witnessed (name) to be in a long time.' Young people's individual needs are clearly set out in their care plans with clear guidance on how these are to be met. There is good engagement with staff who work with the young people to address their needs. Young people enjoy warm and trusting relationships with staff based on mutual respect. These positive relationships encourage young people to share their wishes and feelings. For example, one young person shared a poem she had written with staff, this clearly set out her inner most thoughts and fears. This was able to be used as a basis for further discussion. Young people's views are sought in how the home is run and how they are to be cared for. The residents meetings discuss a range of topics including the revision of the young people's guide. Young people have been consulted over the content of this document. Some young people have attended a leaving care forum where	

issues affecting care leavers are discussed. This helps young people to develop in confidence and also helps prepare them to become responsible citizens.

Young people enjoy participating in a range of activities. For example, football, the cinema, visits to donkey sanctuaries, city farms and nature reserves. Some play table tennis, which some young people have become quite skilled in playing.

The staff place great emphasis in building relationships with families. They recognise that young people when they have left care will gravitate back to their families. Staff work hard to develop these relationships; consulting with them and including them in the decision making. This partnership working has impacted positively on the engagement of parents and carers. Family members say, 'It is brilliant here, the staff are wonderful, I always feel I can ring them.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people are safeguarded by staff identifying risks and behaviour that pose a danger to young people. Strategies are identified, giving guidance to staff to minimise the threat to young people's safety. The incidence of young people going missing has significantly reduced. When this does occur, staff follow guidance and go out to look for young people. The staff discuss with young people and their parents their worries about them going missing. The young people have responded to this caring and nurturing approach which has helped to reduce the episodes of missing. Young people are safe and feel safe in the home. Relationships between the young people are good and they say there is no bullying. There are no concerns with regard to child sexual exploitation. Young people are supported to complain if necessary; a children's rights organisation are regular visitors to the home to assist young people in this area. Their complaints are listened to sensitively and resolved to their satisfaction. The home works hard to foster good relationships within the neighbourhood to avert complaints. The stability of the staff team provides for consistent boundaries which young people respond to. The home adopts a restorative approach which supports young people to address their behaviours in a non-threatening way. The incidence of physical intervention is minimal and used to de-escalate volatile situations by staff	

calmly intervening.

Staff have a clear understanding of safeguarding issues. They support young people's curiosity on their emerging sexual development ensuring that their dignity is preserved and appropriate resources are accessed.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
This is a well-managed home. The acting manager has recently been appointed; she has submitted an application to Ofsted to become the Registered Manager. She holds a BA in Psychology and has nearly completed the level 5 Diploma in management. She has worked for 14 years in children's residential care, six of which was in a senior care role with the responsibility for supervising staff. She is a dynamic individual and has a clear focus on how she wishes to develop the service. She leads a staff team who are well supported, qualified, have good training opportunities and have embraced the new focus of the home. The manager has a clear understanding of the strengths of the home. The staff team come with a range of skills and experiences, each having something to offer to the all-round care and experience provided to the young people. They reflect the ethnic and cultural diversity of the city ensuring that needs relating to individual identity can be addressed. Staff appraisals identify any areas for staff development with clear training packages being put in place to ensure the continued development of the staff team. Young people have made good progress from their starting point. This has been made possible by the nurturing care and support they receive from the stable, enthusiastic and committed staff. The staff have worked closely with families who feel involved in the care of their children. The function of the home has recently changed to preparing young people for independent living. The home harnesses the knowledge and experience of other workers involved with leaving care projects. Staff are developing a leaving care programme that will equip young people to learn skills that are essential in making a successful transition to adulthood. The Statement of Purpose sets out what services the home has to offer but does not clearly specify the age range that the home provides a service for. Also the home admitted a young person in an emergency that did not meet the criteria for admission. This admission was made at the direction of the Registered Provider. This does not ensure that staff have a clear understanding what work should be	

undertaken with these individuals, particularly as they were not ready to embark on a programme of independence.

The manager and staff work hard to develop close working relationships with a number of services, agencies and families. These include the therapeutic social work team who offer guidance and support to the staff team to help them manage some of the complex behaviours the young people present. Rewarding links have also been developed with a training provider who works effectively with the young people helping them to identify future careers and securing apprenticeships. This has had a tremendous impact on some young people's self-esteem by having them committed to their future which impacts positively on their life opportunities.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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