

SC033657

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 13 December 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Staff offer consistent and considered care which meets young people's needs.
- Young people are helped to keep themselves safe through creative individual and group work.

- Leaders and managers monitor the progress of young people effectively and challenge on their behalf to further promote positive outcomes.

The children's home's areas for development

- The report by the independent visitor does not provide a comprehensive evaluation of the safeguarding and welfare of young people at the home. This compromises the monitoring systems in place to protect young people.
- Managers do not use all the available data to measure, through their review systems, the progress of young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2016	Full	Requires improvement
11/10/2016	Full	Inadequate
22/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/07/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the home's care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5).
- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.2).
Specifically, to use a wide range of information to evaluate the quality of care and experiences.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are beginning to build secure and trusting relationships with staff. This is good progress for some young people who have experienced traumatic relationship breakdowns.

Young people have a range of positive experiences through flexible individualised care and a wide range of activities. A trip to the beach was the first time some young people had seen the sea. A camping trip to a farm has been particularly successful and is being repeated in the summer holidays at the young people's request. Young people have also attended a volunteer fair to explore ways that they can become involved in helping others.

Young people participate in care planning reviews. They have been helped to understand when it is not possible to act on their wishes or when other action is taken in their best interests. Sensitive endings to placements have been promoted for young people.

Young people are encouraged to actively participate in day-to-day decisions. For example, they are creating a computer room. Group meetings are enjoyed by the young people, who engage in lively debate and make a range of suggestions. Their requests are acted upon when possible.

Young people attend school and some are making excellent progress. There is effective liaison with schools and staff monitor their educational progress. For others, the manager is challenging exclusions and advocating for a return to full-time education as soon as possible. This maintains the impetus to young people's achievement in

education.

Young people's life experience and knowledge of diversity are being promoted in creative ways. For example, young people have prepared food and served it to homeless people, working with a voluntary organisation. A member of staff who is Muslim has shared his experience of Ramadan with them and is taking them to visit a mosque. As a result, they are learning to understand and respect different ways of life.

The health needs of young people are identified and they are receiving support to understand different aspects of health. For example, they have had a group session around sexual health. Young people are receiving therapeutic support where appropriate and staff have received training in the most appropriate ways to support this.

The staff team is working hard to help young people build emotional resilience through role modelling and individual work. The quality of individual key-work sessions is very good, with a wide range of topics covered in creative and interactive ways with the young people.

There is a careful, considered approach to contact with family to ensure that it is safe and positive for young people. One parent thinks that the home is 'brilliant'. He does not worry about his son now that he is living at the home.

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

Young people are protected by regular and effective care planning involving the staff, social workers, families and other professionals. Professionals are positive about the way the staff team is managing the needs of the young people, despite some of their challenges. Referring to an emergency placement, a social worker commented that: 'The staff have worked really hard to understand his needs. As a result, the placement is far more successful than anyone thought it would be.'

Young people's vulnerabilities are known and are supported by individual risk assessments. There are clear procedures in place for staff to follow if young people go missing. Due to the skilful use of relationships between staff and young people, none of the young people currently living at the home have gone missing since their arrival.

Young people learn how to keep themselves and others safe by group and individual sessions around areas such as bullying and racism. A recommendation in regard to this is met.

Behaviour management is restorative, as stated in the home's statement of purpose. This is being implemented in line with the reviewed behaviour policy and a requirement with regard to this is met. One young person is 'earning' parts of a bike. He receives a picture of each component, which he uses to build up the whole bike, which he will then receive. This visual aid helps him to feel a tangible sense of achievement, while promoting positive behaviour.

Staff seek to understand the triggers for young people's behaviour and respond accordingly. Restraint is used as a final resort, in accordance with legislation. A restorative approach is used in managing behaviour. This is implemented in line with the behaviour policy and a requirement with regard to this is met.

Fire drills involving all young people, are being carried out on a regular basis. The manager is monitoring and evaluating these. A requirement in respect of this is met.

Young people's bedrooms are carefully monitored to ensure that they are safe. The recommendation made at the previous inspection regarding this is met.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Young people are cared for by staff who have the appropriate qualifications and experience. The manager holds a level 5 management qualification.

Care plans clearly identify young people's needs. Leaders and managers are actively monitoring young people's progress. This results in them being able to quickly identify where improvements to care can be made. They then work proactively with other agencies and in the community to meet these.

The views of young people, families and other professionals are being gathered and used to inform evaluation of the quality of care, reported on at six monthly intervals. A requirement in respect of this is met. However evaluation would be further enhanced by consideration of additional evidence from other data which would further demonstrate the progress of young people.

Reports by the independent visitor do not evaluate a sufficient range of information to make a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding. One young person has never been seen by the visitor, as visits are occurring at a time when he has gone to school. This compromises the evaluation of the care and welfare of young people.

The staff team members work effectively with each other and others to provide consistency and stability. There are clear responsibilities and accountability. Staff have a sense of shared ownership about the practice in the home and this is being encouraged by the management team. Staff show enthusiasm and motivation in areas where they have been chosen to lead. For example, the member of staff leading on activities has researched numerous local events which the young people can participate in. This has a positive impact on the range of experiences had by young people.

Staff are supported by effective and regular supervision and appraisal. They have access to a wide variety of training, in line with the statement of purpose, which sees this as 'key to meeting the needs of the young people'. A number of speakers from a wide range of organisations have attended team meetings, such as a drug and alcohol organisation, the youth team and fire service. This has helped the staff to learn about organisations that can assist the young people in their care and enhance their practice.

Staff have also had recent training in a social learning theory based programme for children's homes' staff. This has enhanced their knowledge about how trauma affects the brain of children as they develop and they are applying this to their understanding of the young people.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC033657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Leeds City Council, 40 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3DL

Responsible individual: Robert Murray

Registered manager: Jenny Thwaites

Inspector

Janet Black, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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