

SC033657

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home that provides care and support for up to five children aged between 15 and 17 years old. The aim of the home is to develop the children's independence skills in preparation for moving on to supported accommodation or living independently.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2018.

The inspector spoke to three of the four children who were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 February 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 27 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/07/2021	Full	Good
05/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/04/2019	Full	Good
12/04/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are well supported by skilled staff who are attentive to their needs. Staff sensitively support the children to explore their identity. Children are able to celebrate difference in a non-judgemental space. Furthermore, staff ensure that the children's mental health and emotional well-being are given priority.

Children are helped to develop skills for adulthood. Staff involve the children in meal planning and budgeting. Children undertake household chores and they do their own laundry. Staff reward the children and celebrate these achievements.

The staff meet the children's health needs. Staff use key-work sessions to help the children to process their thoughts and feelings about their experiences. Staff encourage the children to follow healthy lifestyles. There is good support for the children to have a balanced diet, attend their health appointments and exercise regularly. This ensures that the children's health is maintained.

Children enjoy a range of leisure activities. These activities enable the children to have age-appropriate experiences and develop their self-esteem. Leisure activities include playing games in the home and visiting fun places in the community. Children are supported to celebrate differences and develop their identity. This is essential for their sense of self-worth.

Since the last inspection, there has been significant renovation carried out to ensure the home meets the needs of the children. The home is spacious, well furnished and well resourced. Children like their bedrooms and enjoy personalising them. Each bedroom reflects an aspect of the child's personality, their interests and their hobbies. The staff have acted on the children's suggestions to make the communal environment feel homely.

Children's educational progress is varied. Staff recognise and promote the importance of education. For children who do not attend school or an education provision, home tutoring is provided. This ensures that the children have an opportunity to learn.

Some children who have moved into the home from an out-of-area home do not have an identified education provision, as there has been a delay in obtaining their education and healthcare plan. This has a detrimental effect on some children's education progress. One child commented that they would love to continue with their education in an education establishment. However, this has not been possible as they do not have a named education provision.

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

Children's care records are clear and comprehensive and they provide a good overview of the children's lives, the care they receive and the progress that they make. Children's written plans and assessments support the staff to care for them safely and in a way that meets their individual needs.

Staff are skilled in supporting the children when they are anxious, worried, or upset. They use a range of de-escalation strategies to help the children when they are in crisis. This means that physical intervention is not required. When there are incidents, records are clear and provide a good overview and evaluation of what led to the child becoming upset. The staff help the children to work through any concerns that they have and they are supported to express their emotions in more appropriate ways.

Children who go missing from the home benefit from a coordinated response, including the staff following clear protocols to locate them. On their return, the staff welcome the children back, and they work together to look at ways to reduce the likelihood of the children feeling that they need to leave the home in the future. This has included staff being proactive in ensuring that checks are conducted on the children's extended families, so that children can stay overnight with them. Staff update the children's plans regularly to reflect any changes to their known risks or behaviours. This also leads to the children being able to take age-appropriate risks and enjoy time in the community.

The home's location risk assessment is detailed and includes input from other key professionals and agencies. This means that the staff have a good understanding of the emerging risks in the local community that may place children at risk of harm.

Children benefit from individual incentives and a restorative approach to help them to manage their own behaviour. Negative consequences are rarely used. This practice motivates children to model good behaviours.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and deputy manager have developed a culture of high expectations of themselves and the staff team. They are enthusiastic about the children, think highly of them and lead by example. Dedicated and committed staff provide the children with consistent care. Staff work flexibly to support the children to ensure that they have positive experiences.

The manager reflects on the quality of care in the home and across the wider organisation. He identifies both the good work that has been done and the areas he wants to improve further. The manager's approach embodies the therapeutic ethos of restorative practice in the home, which then comes through in staff practice. Staff make use of the therapeutic social workers within the team meetings. They explore the relationships and identify consistent parenting approaches that support the children in their care.

Safer recruitment process has been followed when appointing new staff. This reduces the risk of children being cared for by inappropriate adults.

Staff feel well supported. They receive regular supervision sessions, which help them in their roles. New staff are supported with effective inductions. Staff say that they enjoy working at the home.

Most of the staff are up to date with the provider's mandatory training. Staff receive additional training to meet the specific needs of the children, such as county lines. The manager considered the skills of the staff to ensure that there are sufficient and qualified staff to offer the children appropriate care at all times.

Parents and professionals are complimentary about the effect that the staff have on the children. The manager and staff are described by family and professionals as strong advocates for the children and child-focused in their care practice. Communication with other professionals is effective. Professionals say that the relationships with the staff are positive, and that they work in partnership with managers.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vii)(viii)(x))	30 March 2023

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: SC033657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Registered provider address: Civic Hall, Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 1UR

Responsible individual: Benjamin Finley

Registered manager: Andrew Magner

Inspector

Cherie Chen, Social Care Inspector

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