

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 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.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 July 2021

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: 5 March 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2020	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/04/2019	Full	Good
12/04/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/11/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There is a positive atmosphere of mutual respect in the home between the staff and children. Staff care about the children and are committed to helping them achieve the best possible outcomes in preparation for their future. As a result of this commitment, children are making good progress in many aspects of their lives.

The staff work closely with the therapeutic team to develop their practice. Staff are keen to understand the cause of anxiety and disruptive behaviours and help the children identify this for themselves. The use of therapeutic techniques is promoted by the staff team. As a result of this individualised support, children are more able to recognise their anxiety and are learning to manage it.

Children develop their independence skills at a pace and level that meets their individual needs. Independence work is wide ranging and varied. This includes preparing children for the pressures of society as well as practical skills, such as recognising the signs of exploitation and managing conflict. This gives children the skills and knowledge needed to be able to live independently and protect themselves.

Engagement in education is actively encourage by staff. Incentives are used and discussions are held with the children to help them overcome barriers to learning. For most children, this has led to considerable progress and has given them the ability to access further education.

The home's décor and furnishings are worn. Despite the staff team's efforts to decorate, some areas of the home require renovation. The home does not meet the standards expected and does not give the children a sense of pride in where they live. The plans to refurbish have been in place for some time but have not yet started.

Children are encouraged to spend time with family and friends, when appropriate. Staff actively try to engage with children's friends and support them to have positive relationships with their peers. This helps the children to have a sense of belonging while developing skills to manage complex relationships.

Children who have left the home have had positive endings, even when this has been brought forward. The staff maintain contact with the children who have left and undertake work with them on behalf of social workers. This provides children with a continued safe base and sense of belonging.

Diversity days with the children lead to discussions regarding different cultures. This is promoting an awareness and acceptance of unfamiliar cultures and religions.

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

Direct work with the children is undertaken by the staff team to help them learn how to identify risks and dangers. This gives children the knowledge and skills needed to be able to make positive decisions when they live independently.

Staff are proactive when children go missing from home. They are aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff have been proactive in logging and sharing concerning information, which has helped to identify risks and implement support measures to better protect the children.

The manager has worked closely with professionals to identify significant concerns for one child. The manager ensures that plans are frequently reviewed and amended. Changes are shared with the staff team. This ensures that they are consistent in their approach.

Incidents are reviewed and changes are made to plans when necessary. However, at times, significant incidents have not been notified within timescales or have lacked some detail. This hinders the regulator's ability to monitor the home.

Restraints take place as a last resort. The manager has oversight of the reports and identifies areas of improvement. Positive feedback from the therapeutic crisis intervention team identifies that staff use their skill set well to de-escalate situations. This helps to prevent children becoming dysregulated or causing harm to themselves and others.

Allegations are investigated thoroughly and relevant professionals are informed. When a child has a known history of making allegations, the manager has ensured that this has been explored and that professionals are notified. This approach ensures that safeguards are in place for all children.

Staff lock some doors at night and children are not able to leave the home independently. This has become standard practice within the home and is not fully considered or risk assessed as necessary. This has the potential to escalate children's anxious behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has a clear vision for the home and is focused on developing children's independence. He actively seeks out feedback from children and professionals. This has helped him to identify effective strategies to support the children. The staff team are motivated, committed and adaptable to children's needs.

The manager has agreed to admit some children outside the remit set out in the statement of purpose. For example, some children have not had education in place despite this being a part of the criteria for moving in to the home. Positively, the

manager has identified this and is working on ways to prevent this happening in the future.

The staff team communicate well and are empowered to make decisions. They challenge each other and share their viewpoint to reach decisions that are in the best interest of the children. This supports good team working and creates a happy environment for the children to live in.

Staff have continued to have weekly team meetings despite the restrictions of the COVID-19 pandemic. This has given staff further knowledge and increased their skills in identifying concerns and risks that children present.

The manager does not yet have the level 5 qualification required as per regulation. This has been delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the manager is currently trying to resolve this.

The staff team is diverse and their skill set is being utilised to promote positive outcomes for children. Each staff member has their own unique style to support the children. This enables genuine relationships to be made and results in a happy home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that— children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv))	02 August 2021
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii))	31 March 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that serious events are notified to Ofsted as soon as they are able to and that notifications contain detail of action taken during and following the event. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure that children only move in to the home that meets the statement of purpose and that children are compatible with, and committed to, the independence programme. Consultation with education professionals should take place prior to children moving in. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that all managers working in the children's home have the qualification required within the relevant timescales. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)

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 address: Leeds City Council, Civic Hall, Calverley Street,
Leeds LS1 1UR

Responsible individual: Joel Hanna

Registered manager: Andrew Magner

Inspector

Debra Boldy, Social Care Inspector

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