

SC033723

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to 5 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection there were 2 children living in the home. One child was spoken with.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2024.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 February 2026

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	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2024	Full	Good
28/02/2024	Full	Good
08/03/2022	Full	Good
17/09/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Both children have lived in the home for a significant period. This has contributed to their strong sense of stability and belonging. As the children grow older, staff appropriately encourage the development of independence skills, including cooking, cleaning and using public transport.

Although one child's progress has slowed, they continue to experience placement stability. Staff maintain a persistent and consistent approach to encouraging the child's engagement. There are clear strengths identified for the child, such as consistent school attendance and no missing from home episodes since they moved into the home over two years ago.

Staff openly discuss relevant issues with each child, including bereavement, inappropriate sexualised behaviour and managing complex family relationships. This work is delivered in a supportive and non-judgemental manner. These conversations are beginning to help children understand and manage their emotions better.

Written records, particularly relating to missing from home episodes, are sensitively produced. They demonstrate staff's clear level of concern for the child's safety and welfare. Staff write them in a way that would reassure the child, now or in the future, that staff were genuinely committed to locating them and ensuring their wellbeing.

All children are engaged in education. Staff attend relevant education meetings and advocate effectively to ensure that provision continues to meet each child's needs. When children struggle with attendance, staff work closely with them to reinforce expectations and help them understand the importance of attending school.

One child said that they feel listened to by staff, and that staff act on their views. The child's requests, such as a pool table and changes to the conservatory, have been taken seriously. Staff are supporting the child to prepare the space by supporting the child to paint the area themselves.

Some areas of the home have sustained damage. Staff have attempted repairs, and some redecoration is evident. However, parts of the home have lost their previously homely appearance. The external area is untidy, with food containers and broken items outside the landing window and in the garden. Timely action is needed to ensure the home's internal and external environment remains safe, clean and welcoming.

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

Behaviour management within the home is underpinned by positive relationships and a consistent use of positive reinforcement. Children engage appropriately with the established incentive scheme, which supports their understanding of expected behaviour

and reinforces progress. When behaviour falls short, staff provide clear, reflective guidance to help children understand the impact of their actions.

Staff demonstrate a strong understanding of each child's individual risks. Staff have taken sustained and proactive action to safeguard one child who has experienced multiple missing-from-home episodes. This has included travelling to various locations to search for the child, developing constructive relationships with the child's peers, and undertaking mapping exercises to better identify patterns, influences, and potential risks. This helped staff to better understand the child's circumstances and how to mitigate risks.

Staff routinely engage children in conversations about personal safety. Such conversations include the risks associated with going missing, unsafe individuals, exploitation, substance misuse, and fire safety. Although children do not always want to listen, staff maintain a consistent, child-centred approach that reinforces pertinent safeguarding messages over time.

Since the previous inspection, there has been one recorded use of physical intervention. This intervention was low level and judged to be necessary, proportionate, and compliant with legal requirements. Staff predominantly rely on strong relationships, early de-escalation, and consistent boundaries to maintain safety without the need for physical measures.

Children report that they feel safe living in the home. One child said, 'Staff really do try to help us, especially when things get a little crazy at times.' This reflects the child's perception of staff commitment and support.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Managers and staff have experienced a challenging year, including the emotional impact of one child's placement ending. Changes in the provider's senior leadership team have resulted in inconsistent oversight and reduced support for the home's manager. As a result, some managerial responsibilities have not been completed in line with expectations. These include delays in completing quality of care reports and inconsistencies in delivering management supervision sessions in accordance with organisational policy. This lack of consistent oversight has contributed to the manager feeling unsupported at times.

Despite the shortfalls in senior leadership, the manager and deputy manager work effectively together. Staff speak well of both managers, describing them as approachable, supportive, and accessible. The leadership team is viewed as a stabilising presence in the home.

Staff feel confident to share personal challenges or difficulties with leaders and managers. They report that managers listen, offer emotional and practical support, and help them feel valued. This supportive approach has helped staff recover from personal

difficulties and confidently return to work. Staff consistently described the home as a safe and supportive environment where their wellbeing is prioritised.

The manager demonstrates a proactive approach to reviewing children's placements. This ensures that each placement is appropriate and meets each child's needs. Recent work undertaken to review one child's placement reflects the manager's commitment to securing the right support for children.

The manager makes appropriate referrals to specialist services, including the Safe Project for exploitation concerns, the therapeutic team, and the PREVENT programme when risks associated with extremist ideologies arise. These actions demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding pathways and multi-agency working.

Team meetings are held regularly and are well attended. Every second week, a therapeutic social worker participates, supporting staff in understanding children's emotional and behavioural needs. Staff report that these meetings allow for open and honest dialogue, and observations confirmed a reflective team environment.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
A responsible individual must— have the capacity, experience and skills to supervise the management of the home, or the homes, in respect of which the responsible individual is nominated. (Regulation 26 (7)(b))	12 May 2026
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and	12 May 2026

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

(Regulation 45(1) (2)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

This requirement has been restated

Recommendation

- The registered person should provide a nurturing environment that is homely. In particular, they should ensure that the outside of the property is well maintained and tidy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC033723

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Merrion House, Merrion Centre, Leeds LS2 8LX

Responsible individual: Benjamin Finley

Registered manager: Michelle McMonagle

Inspectors

Deirdre Silkstone, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Jo Birtwhistle, Social Care Inspector

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