

SC033808

Registered provider: Wakefield Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority. It provides a short-breaks service for up to seven children who may have physical or learning disabilities and/or sensory impairment.

At the time of this inspection, six children were attending the short-breaks service.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 June 2025

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: 16 April 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/04/2024	Full	Good
19/12/2023	Full	Inadequate
20/02/2023	Full	Good
19/01/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The six children seen during the inspection presented as happy and relaxed in the home. The children enjoy their time spent with staff and friends, which they benefit from. Additionally, the children have access to independent advocacy support from a familiar face who visits the home every six weeks.

Staff sensitively interact with the children. They understand children's preferred methods of communication and respond to their nonverbal cues. The use of different approaches means that children have a say regarding their daily care. For example, children share their views about their preferred bedroom and the nights that they wish to stay at the home. Staff are mindful of children's cultural identity, and some children have additional communication aids that enable them to converse in their preferred language.

Staff know the children well and offer them structured and individualised care. The regular communication with significant others and use of communication books helps staff offer the children consistency of care. One parent talked about how reading the communication book provides them with a greater understanding of the events that their child enjoys.

The children enjoy a variety of activities in line with their wishes. They enjoy trips to the park and the cinema. They also love to go camping and eating out, but they also like to 'chill' and spend time with their friends. Staff assist the children to reach independence targets in line with their individual needs, such as trying new foods and activities. These opportunities help children develop their social and emotional skills and support them to have fun.

Staff help children to feel welcome, safe, valued and comfortable when they arrive for their break. If children experience personal challenges staying overnight, alternative options are explored. One parent said: 'Staff are committed to offering support in line with [child's name]'s wishes.' This sensitive care planning helps reduce any potential worries for children and assists them to feel valued.

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

The home offers overnight care for young adults when children are not in the home. The registered manager has implemented actions to ensure that any practice issues do not impact on the children's safety and welfare. For example, staff now check shared computer systems to ensure that any stored content is suitable for children.

Children have identified staff who care for them. Staff know the children well and are sensitive to any changes in their behaviours. This close relationship means that staff can identify any unusual patterns and take actions to promote children's welfare. Children's

risk assessments and plans provide staff with clear guidance regarding actions that they should take to reduce any known risks to the children.

Children do not go missing from the home. However, staff have access to the children's missing-from-home procedures and know what actions that they are required to take. Additionally, staff have a clear understanding of procedures for reporting any practice concerns. Leaders and managers have systems in place to ensure that child protection concerns are shared with significant others and the local authority designated officer.

Staff support children by setting appropriate boundaries, and providing sensitive care that respects their privacy and upholds their dignity. Staff use identified de-escalation techniques to help prevent incidents from escalating. The children are only physically held when necessary to protect themselves and others. These holds are proportionate, and staff uses creative ways to understand events from the child's perspective.

On two occasions, staff used a hold that is not in line with the home's procedures. These incidents are recorded and reviewed, highlighting that the holds were the least restrictive and no harm came to the children. However, these physical holds were not in line with the home's procedure and staff's taught techniques.

Leaders and managers have assured that a fire risk assessment has been completed and are confident that the current fire evacuation procedures are effective. However, the outcome of an additional fire assessment is unknown. Therefore, they are unable to be confident that the home fully complies with relevant health and safety legislations.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has a permanent registered manager in post who is suitably experienced and qualified. The registered manager is also supported by two experienced and dedicated deputy managers. The leaders and managers work together, which enhances the support offered to staff and children.

Leaders and managers have workforce and home development plans that highlight actions needed to support staff and develop the quality of care for children. Currently, the home is sufficiently staffed, but on occasions, children's short breaks have been cancelled because of staffing difficulties.

Staff talk positively about the support from leaders and managers. Team meetings are productive and offer staff time to reflect on the care offered to the children. Staff receive timely and reflective supervision that assists them to discuss their learning needs and reflect on children's care needs. This support helps staff offer children consistency of care.

Newly appointed staff have positive inductions and receive additional support from leaders and managers. One staff member said that 'This has been the best induction; it

has really helped me to understand the job.' The support offered to staff helps develop the quality of care for the children.

The registered manager ensures that Ofsted is notified of significant events. However, on two occasions there has been a delay sharing information regarding two significant events. This has not impacted on the support offered to the children. However, the delay has prevented timely independent oversight for children.

Leaders and managers have sought the views of children and their parents and carers about the choice of activities. However, leaders and managers have not consistently ensured that children's views are embedded in improving the quality of care.

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
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) This requirement is restated.	22 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that timely actions are taken to ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislations. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff are trained for any techniques that are used, and that these are in line with the home's policy and procedures. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.57)
- The registered person should ensure that oversight of the home and review of the quality of care are informed by observation and engagement with children, families and professionals. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)

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: SC033808

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wakefield Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Bond Street, Wakefield WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Cheryl Whitehouse

Registered manager: Andrea Wright

Inspectors

Gina Lightfoot, Social Care Inspector

Rachel Moore, Social Care Inspector

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