

SC035154

Registered provider: Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority and provides care and accommodation for up to five children. The aim of the home is to apply the model of care to support children to be able to return home, to foster carers or to independent living.

The home was previously a short-breaks service and re-opened in December 2020 as a residential children's home.

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: 3 to 4 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 25 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2018	Full	Outstanding
04/09/2017	Full	Outstanding
08/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/05/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children have positive relationships with core staff members. This enables them to request support when needed and share their worries or concerns. Staff respond to this and put plans in place.

Activities are limited and there is no clear structure in place for the children. Summer holiday plans for the children were limited and while one child had a holiday away, there were no other outings planned. This does not provide children with opportunities to engage in positive experiences.

The home is well decorated, and efforts are made to help the children feel that this is their home. However, there was some damage to a child's furniture with no clear plans of how this was being addressed. This does not promote the child's well-being.

Education is encouraged and the staff have adapted to the needs of the children to try and engage them. Reading is actively encouraged in the home and staff support children to understand the importance of education. This enables children to develop their knowledge and skills.

Children are supported to see their families and friends in line with their plans. However, at times, this is not always positive. The management team is trying to work with family and friends to improve communication and relationships. This is helping to reduce some of the risks.

The manager uses impact risk assessments to ensure that children's needs are known and understood prior to them moving in. The manager has identified that the home can no longer meet the needs of one child and has escalated this. However, there are no clear timescales for the child to move out and the impact on the other children has not been fully recognised. As a result, all of the children are now being exposed to further risk and disruption.

Staff work with children to engage in direct discussions regarding risks, health and education. There have been improvements in some areas as a result of this, and children will accept support from staff that know them well. However, there is a lack of consistent approach among the staff, and topics are not re-visited or expanded on with the children. This hinders the children's ability to learn and to make informed choices about their personal safety.

The management team is working with therapeutic services for support. The information provided by these services is not always clearly shared with the staff team. This means that plans are not always followed by staff.

Professionals and family spoken to are happy with the care the staff team is providing. The manager has been proactive in working with other professionals for support and to implement plans. However, not all strategies used have been implemented with social workers' knowledge, preventing full oversight or safeguards to be in place.

Children's records are child-friendly. This enables children to understand the plans in place and captures their voice. It will also provide them with records in their future that provide a good overview of their life.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Missing from home episodes for children have been high. Staff work with other agencies and family to return children safely. However, it is not clear as to the level of welfare checks children should be receiving through the day. This means that staff practice is inconsistent.

Risk assessments and protocols lack information regarding known risks. This does not provide staff with clear guidance as to how to support the children.

Staff do not respond effectively when children are under the influence of cannabis or alcohol. Staff have not had sufficient training in this area and there are no clear plans in place for them to follow. No checks have been carried out when children have been under the influence, and no medical advice has been requested. This has placed children at risk of harm.

Incident reports and restraint records are detailed and are evaluated by the manager. However, missing from home reports have not always been evaluated. Information within these and lessons learned are not evident in the children's plans. This does not provide staff with clear strategies to use and exposes children and staff to a risk of harm.

The home has locks on the doors in the communal areas. One area of the home is locked without any clear rationale. At times, areas of the home have been locked when a child has been distressed without any clear record that this is a strategy staff use. It has not been agreed with social workers or formally reviewed. It is not clearly recorded how often this has happened or the reason for this taking place. Therefore, it is unclear if this action is necessary and proportionate.

Staff are present when a child is receiving personal care. While this is reasonable given their age, it is not evidenced that this takes place and there is no evidence of this being agreed with professionals. This leaves the child and staff at risk of harm and allegations.

Some aspects of risk management documents are up to date and provide clear guidance for staff. This is for the lower risk areas which have not changed during

this time. This evidences that the management team can provide staff with the level of clarity needed.

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

The manager registered in December 2020. She is aware that the home is in its infancy and there are areas of improvement that need to be addressed. The manager is aware of her own strengths and weaknesses and is eager to develop.

There are not enough core staff to support the children. Casual staff from other homes in the local authority are used. This does not provide stability or consistency for the children.

The manager lacks an awareness of the home's policies and procedures. These have not been followed and staff are not aware of their responsibilities. Children are at a risk of harm as a result of this.

The manager does not have training in the model of care that is being used. This means she is unable to support staff to implement this model of care and is not working in line with the statement of purpose.

Staff training is limited in areas that are relevant to the children's needs. Due to COVID-19, some training has been completed online. However, the learning from this has not been checked or evaluated by the management team. This means that not all staff have the skills to fully support children.

Staff supervisions are significantly out of date and do not take place within timescales. This means that staff do not have regular support from managers to discuss issues in a private forum or to focus on their individual development.

Internal and external monitoring systems are not effective in identifying and addressing shortfalls. Reviews of quality of care do not evaluate or identify areas of improvement. This means that the quality of care and safeguarding practice does not improve.

The management team recognises the difficulty in transitioning from the short breaks service to a residential children's home and that staff are adapting to this. Managers have a plan to build on the skillset of the staff team and are focused on driving forward an improvement plan.

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 registered person must ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; 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)) In particular, all communal areas should be accessible to the children and any restrictions on this should be clearly identified within the children's plans, approved by social workers and kept under regular review.	20 August 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	30 November 2021

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii) (b))	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each	30 November 2021

child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e)(f)(h))

Recommendations

- The registered manager should ensure that a review of the quality of care takes place every six months. A report should be produced to clearly identify the strengths of the homes care, any weaknesses and actions required for the next six months. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- The registered manager should ensure that children are provided with appropriate furniture and that items that are damaged are repaired or replaced as soon as possible. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- The registered manager should ensure that the home's statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and amended. It must clearly state any restriction of liberty that may be used, including locking of any doors, and how this will be reviewed and agreed with other professionals. The updated document should be sent to Ofsted within 28 days. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

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: SC035154

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Calderdale School Effectiveness Service, 2nd Floor, Westgate House, Westgate, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 1PS

Responsible individual: Guy Greenwood

Registered manager: Claire Chiles

Inspector

Debra Boldy, Social Care Inspector

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