

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	17/05/2016
Unique reference number	SC035154
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council, Northgate House, Halifax, HX1 1UN

Responsible individual	Anne Tully
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Pauline Yates

Inspection date	17/05/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection. This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. Young people continue to make good progress through staying at the home and receiving outreach support from staff when back in their family homes. Young people's progress is individual to their starting points and includes returning to full-time education, fewer arguments and disruption in relationships with family members and a reduction in going missing from home incidents. The majority of young people experience a significant improvement in their ability to express feelings in an acceptable way and communicate with their families. Young people and their families feel fully supported to work through and resolve the difficulties that they experience. One parent said, 'The experience of leading up to and getting the service has been absolutely fantastic. They have offered me more support than any other service before. I haven't felt supported until they (the staff) got involved.' The exceptional and dedicated service that staff provide includes regular home visits and ongoing advice outside of young people's stays. In addition, and noted by families and professionals, is the support given by staff to young people and carers in crisis situations, often late into the night. This ensures that young people and their carers receive timely responses when most in need. It also significantly contributes to young people continuing to live at home, rather than circumstances leading to them being looked after by the local authority. A social worker commented, 'When things are going on at home he use [used] to go wandering off late at night round the streets. Now he will go to the staff and they will talk to him and safely return him home.' Young people feel listened to and their experiences and needs are central to the organisation of the home. For example, changes in staff rotas provide greater stability over a longer period of time for young people. One young person said, 'They just understand you and stuff.' Innovative work includes young people being engaged with a commissioned youth charity in rebranding and renaming the service. They are currently working on the production of a music video that will use their lyrics/raps/poetry to tell of their life experiences and experiences of the service. Planning for young people to begin visiting the home is thorough and clear. Young people are quickly made to feel welcome and at ease. One young person commented, 'I didn't expect for staff to be so nice. I like it here. They are always	

there to talk to if you need them. I was a bit nervous, but as soon as I got here it wasn't like I thought it was going to be.'

Both young people and their families are fully involved in the goal setting and are clear about the services that the home can provide. Joint ownership of the work between staff, young people and their carers ensures that there is a shared commitment to the plan of work. Regular reviews and ongoing consultation with young people and their families, maintain the agreements and enthusiasm to make the identified changes. One social worker commented, 'I've seen an improvement in home life. There were incidents all the time previously when mum couldn't cope. They have helped mum and have helped her develop strategies that I have seen her put into place.'

An experienced and extremely enthusiastic manager leads the service. He is passionate about continuously making improvements and ensuring that staff have the skills and support to make a positive and lasting difference to the lives of young people. Developments in the service since the last inspection are numerous and include securing shadowing visits for staff with field workers, submitting a funding bid for a therapist to join the staff team, widening the diversity of the staff team in terms of ethnicity, religion and life experiences and introducing additional supervision of staff that is reflective focused. This latter improvement ensures that staff are provided with time to deepen and develop their understanding of working with young people and their families.

The manager and staff work well with other agencies, ensuring that young people receive the services that they need. Although primary responsibility for education lies with parents and carers, the staff are committed to improving young people's life chances through fully encouraging their attendance. Staff also act as advocates. One social worker commented, 'They went beyond what they needed to do. They attended meetings with the panel of governors to state his case, which they didn't need to do. When mum hasn't had any money to get him to school they have organised transport for him.'

Young people are well protected during their stays at the home. Staff also work hard with parents to ensure that young people also remain safe while at their family home. There have been no significant incidents, notifications or complaints since the last inspection and only one incident of physical intervention. Staff spend good quality time with young people, enabling them to use reflection and discussion to make positive, safer choices.

At the last inspection, one requirement and one recommendation were set. Both of these have now been met. At this inspection, one requirement is made that relates to the processes and completion of documentation following a physical intervention. Young people's welfare is not affected by these administrative omissions.

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children, with emotional and behavioural difficulties, under short break arrangements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/05/2015	Full	Good
19/12/2014	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/09/2014	Full	Adequate
18/07/2014	Full	Inadequate

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person") has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	11/06/2016

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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