

# SC035154

Registered provider: Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This short-stay service is operated by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children or young people aged between 11 and 17 years old on admission. The service aims to provide children and young people who are assessed as being on the edge of care with time and space away from their family home. This is provided with the intention of implementing interventions that will reduce the risk of family breakdown and prevent entry into care. In very specific circumstances, the service can also provide short-stay support for children and young people who are looked after by the local authority. The manager has been registered at this home since May 2017.

**Inspection dates:** 25 to 26 April 2018

|                                                                                           |                    |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b> | <b>outstanding</b> |
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|                                                             |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

**Date of last inspection:** 4 September 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 04/09/2017      | Full            | Outstanding            |
| 08/11/2016      | Full            | Outstanding            |
| 17/05/2016      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |
| 23/02/2016      | Full            | Good                   |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding**

The staff use restorative principles and a systemic approach, which is firmly embedded into their practice. This helps the staff to develop strong relationships with the children, young people and their families. Many of the children and young people have made exceptional progress in all aspects of their development and enjoy enhanced day-to-day experiences, both at the home and in their lives.

Many of the children and young people who have used the service have made significant improvements in building their confidence and their ability to build and maintain relationships, and in developing their social skills. This has had a positive impact on their self-esteem and emotional well-being.

The children and young people who have been excluded from education or have had difficulties in maintaining their attendance have been supported to re-engage in educational settings. Some of the children and young people have benefited from vastly improved attendance and attainment. The staff celebrate the achievements of the children and young people and encourage them to have high aspirations for their futures.

The children and young people are provided with a wide range of positive activities to help them establish their own interests and talents, and give them positive experiences that they have not experienced before. The children and young people have been to trampoline parks, the cinema and the gym, and enjoy walks in local parks, going to theme parks and eating out. The children and young people and their families participate in social experiences, and are able to adopt similar experiences into their lives at home.

The children and young people who stay at the home are influential in deciding how they will be supported by staff and what they want to achieve while they are staying at the home and receiving this service. The children and young people develop their initial 'vision plan' with their family, and with the support of the staff at the home. The children and young people contribute to menu and activity choices and provide regular feedback through structured and informal methods of communication.

The staff work holistically with children and young people and their families to prevent familial breakdown. The systemic approach means that the whole family benefits from the planned intervention programme. The children and young people, their families, professionals and partners confirm that these interventions are highly successful and have a positive impact in preventing entry to the care system.

The staff give parents the confidence to be authoritative, and children and young people the skills to deal with their emotions and an understanding of boundaries and consequences. This has significantly improved relationships within families. One parent said: 'It has been a godsend. We used to argue a lot. Now my son will say I'm going outside for 10 minutes to calm down.'

## **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

The service provides vital support for families, children and young people in crisis. This work helps the children, young people and their families to learn new skills in conflict resolution, and equips them to manage their own crises in the future. The staff work very hard to enable the children and young people to remain in the care of their families and prevent them from entering the care system.

The children and young people do not go missing from this home. There have been no allegations or serious incidents since the last inspection. Physical intervention is uncommon and is only used appropriately to reduce the risk of harm to children and young people. Records are comprehensive and evaluated by leaders to ensure that there is a culture of learning from incidents.

Careful consideration is given to the matching process to ensure that children and young people placed together are a positive influence on each other and that relationships in the home are harmonious.

Risk assessments are comprehensive and contain clear strategies that are grounded in a restorative approach for the staff to manage challenging behaviour. The children and young people are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and have made significant positive changes to behave in a more socially acceptable manner.

The staff work closely with other professionals to identify and address unacceptable risks to the children and young people's safety, both in the community and in their homes. The children and young people have been helped to reduce risk-taking behaviour, such as substance misuse, criminality and anti-social behaviour. One parent said: 'This has turned our lives around. My son doesn't talk about drugs and violence anymore.'

Leaders work with other services, such as the child sexual exploitation team, to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of any children and young people with identified risks. They work together to deliver the same protective agenda and ensure that children and young people are helped to become safer.

Staff have had extensive training in a variety of topics to carry out crucial preventative work with adolescents who stay at the home and access outreach services. This preventative work includes sex education, administration of the C-Card, which provides contraception for young people, and delivering messages about e-safety and the risks posed on the internet.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The leadership team is a highly experienced, competent and inspiring role model to the staff team, and the children and young people and families who access the service. Leaders promote a culture of high aspiration and are deeply committed to ensuring that the service provides positive experiences and a range of creative methods of support to

enable the children, young people and families to make positive progress in their lives.

The majority of staff are qualified and highly experienced in providing care for children and young people. Staff benefit from an extensive and varied training programme that includes externally sourced courses provided in conjunction with a local university. This training enables the staff team to work on an equal footing with social care professionals across the organisation. It provides a consistent approach for the children, young people and their families.

Supervision and support for staff is outstanding. There are three models of supervision that are used frequently. These include case management, reflective supervision and consultation with the organisation's therapeutic service for any complex interventions.

Care planning processes are highly effective, and there is clear evidence of the children and young people making impressive progress in their social development and their physical and emotional health, and in increasing their skills for independence.

The service is innovative and continually evolves to meet emerging unmet needs. An example of this is the need to provide crisis support and intervention for foster carers to enhance placement stability. This is the next planned development of the service.

Leaders make very effective use of monitoring systems, and the home has a development plan that is influenced by feedback from families, children and young people who use the service, and other partners.

Social care partners have provided highly positive feedback about this service. One social worker said: 'The service is a vital and invaluable part of how we try to meet young people's needs in this area. I couldn't be more impressed with the work they do.' Another social worker said: 'If I had my way, I would want their input on all of my cases.'

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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:** Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Northgate House, Halifax HX1 1UN

**Responsible individual:** Anne Tully

**Registered manager:** Aaron McLoughlin

## Inspector

Nicola Thomas, social care inspector

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