

SC035154

Registered provider: Calderdale Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by the local authority and provides care for up to five children. Three children currently live at the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2020 and holds the relevant qualifications. There are plans for a change to the management at this home. The new manager will transfer from another children's home within the local authority. The new manager and the registered manager were both present during the inspection.

Inspection dates: 26 and 27 September 2022

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: 5 July 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: at a full inspection on 5 and 6 July 2022, this children's home was judged inadequate. Following this judgement, Ofsted issued a notice restricting accommodation at the home and three compliance notices under regulations 12, 13 and 14.

A monitoring visit took place on 16 August 2022. The provider had met the compliance notice for regulation 14. The provider had not met all the steps within the compliance notices for regulations 12 and 13, so these were reissued. The notice restricting accommodation at the home remained in place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2022	Full	Inadequate
13/01/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/04/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

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

Staff shortages and poor leadership and management at the home have had an impact on the overall progress and experiences of children. Since the last full inspection, some progress has been made to address these shortfalls. There is an action plan which is underway.

The progress children make in relation to their health is mixed. One child is well supported by a team of staff who have the skills and knowledge to help them with their complex health needs. Other children have identified health needs such as poor emotional or mental well-being and are not being provided with the right support to help them.

The children cannot access complaints leaflets without speaking to staff. This means that children are unable to raise any concerns they have privately or to external parties. This does not align with the home's statement of purpose and does not enable children to raise important issues. As a result, children do not feel listened to.

The home is furnished and decorated internally to a good standard. However, there is some damage throughout the home which has not been repaired. Outside of the home there is rubbish and debris which present as a hazard. This does not provide a homely environment for the children.

None of the children have a lockable cupboard or safe in their bedrooms. This means that they are unable to safely secure personal belongings or items that are important to them.

The staff talk to children about a range of topics specific to the children's individual needs. Any incidents are discussed with children after they have happened to agree how to avoid future reoccurrences. This helps the children to reflect and learn.

The staff help the children to spend time with the people who are important to them. They promote family time and help build children's relationships with their families and previous carers. Family members and carers said how much they appreciate this support.

Children who attend school and college are making progress in their education. One child is not currently in any form of formal education. The staff advocate on their behalf and encourage them to complete alternative education provision.

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

Individualised behaviour plans and positive handling guidelines are in place for the children. There are strategies to mitigate against assessed risks. However, there is important information missing, and conflicting information in one child's records. This means staff do not have all the information needed to support children to manage risks safely.

Some incidents result in staff holding a child to keep everyone safe. When this happens, recording of these physical interventions is poor. The manager's evaluation is not always clear regarding how safe, appropriate and proportionate the hold was. This potentially places children at risk.

Fire drills are not being carried out in line with the home's fire risk assessment. There are also no fire evacuation procedures in place for any of the children. This is particularly important given the specific needs of the children at the home. If there was a fire, the children do not know what the evacuation plan is, and the staff are unaware of their responsibilities.

The staff use consequences sparingly. However, when they do, poor recording means that it is unclear why the consequence has been used. No debrief with the child takes place following the use of the measure, to discuss the incident and how to avoid it happening again. The manager has not consistently reviewed the effectiveness of any measures in the allotted timeframe.

Room searches are undertaken appropriately. However, the rationale for the searches is not always clear in the recording.

Staff understand the children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. They are clear about their responsibilities and the steps to follow to reduce the risks to children. Records show that staff respond to immediate safeguarding concerns and follow the correct procedures. However, not all incidents are recorded. Therefore, safeguarding records do not give a true reflection of what has happened in the home.

Children rarely go missing from the home. If they do, the staff take appropriate action to ensure their safe return. This includes following the correct procedures as well as contacting family, trying to maintain contact with the child and searching the local area. This proactive response from staff means that some risks are reduced for those children who are vulnerable when they are in the community.

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

The registered manager does not have good oversight of the home. Auditing, monitoring and reviewing processes are not effective because they have failed to identify any shortfalls. This does not help to improve the quality of care so children can make good progress.

Some serious incidents have not been notified to Ofsted. This means that the regulator has not been able to review this information to ensure that children are safeguarded effectively.

Not all staff have up-to-date training. Some new staff have not completed the provider's mandatory training. In addition, not all staff have completed training specific to the individual needs of the children. This means that not all the staff have the skills and knowledge needed to ensure children are better protected and receive a good standard of care.

The home's location risk assessment is not up to date. It has not been reviewed within the last year. It does not include all known risks and relevant information from stakeholders, such as the police.

Consent for the use of door alarms has not been sought from children's social workers. This means a blanket rule is applied to the monitoring of children and does not consider children's individual risks and whether the alarms are needed or appropriate.

The children's guide does not include the correct details for the children's commissioner. This means that children are unable to access this source of external advocacy should they wish to.

Staff have regular supervision sessions. The children's risks and needs are discussed, and staff are supported by managers to reflect on their practice. Team meetings are informative and take place regularly.

The home has not been managed effectively, with a lack of oversight from the registered manager. The provider has implemented new management arrangements to improve this situation.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to behaviour plans and the need for them to contain all relevant information. This also specifically relates to incident reports being completed consistently by the staff.	27 November 2022
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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;	27 December 2022

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)(c)(h))	
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b))	11 October 2022
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))	11 October 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;	27 December 2022

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 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(ii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to records of consequences and to physical intervention records.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	27 December 2022
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).	27 November 2022

When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the home is maintained to a good standard. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that the children are provided with appropriate furniture, including a lockable cabinet or drawers to securely store personal items, including any personal information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- The registered person should ensure that children are aware of the complaints procedure and are able to access the forms and make a complaint without the need to ask staff, in order to protect their own privacy. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)
- The registered person should ensure that the children's guide helps children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- The registered person should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: Calderdale Council

Registered provider address: Princess Buildings, Princess Street, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 1TS

Responsible individual: Guy Greenwood

Registered manager: Claire Chiles

Inspectors

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector
Paula Shepherd, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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