

SC035155

Registered provider: Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides short-break services for children and young people, during the day and overnight, from the ages of four to 17. The home provides a service for children and young people who may have moderate to severe learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, complex health needs and/or a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder (where there is also a learning disability). The service can provide assistance, in conjunction with behavioural support staff, for family assessments and directly participates in intensive behavioural support programmes with specific families.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 December 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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: 22 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/05/2018	Full	Outstanding
24/10/2017	Full	Good
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/10/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people who are new to the setting are welcomed in a sensitive and child-focused way. There is a personalised admissions process. The staff visit the families and talk to the children and young people before they come into the home. Staff gather information about their individual needs, routines and preferences, ensuring that children and young people are welcomed in a way which helps them to feel safe and secure from the beginning. The welcome booklet uses pictures and photographs, communicating information about the home to children and young people who require additional support.

The long-standing staff team provides excellent care to the children and young people, investing its time into building trusting relationships. Children and young people make their views and wishes known through a variety of communication methods. The use of symbols, objects of reference, pictures, signing and speech is highly effective in giving children and young people a genuine voice. The staff are able to read the children and young people's body language, facial expressions and tone of voice to understand what they are thinking and feeling. One parent said about her child: 'Now he has his own voice.' As a result of being heard and understood, the children and young people's negative behaviours are reduced.

The children and young people are making progress in many areas of their lives. They have made progress in their ability to communicate with others which has a positive impact on challenging behaviours. Their life experiences are enriched by the care that they receive. Children and young people are developing their life skills, improving their sleeping patterns and have greater tolerance of others. The goals for children and young people are planned in individual care plans and their progress captured in personalised development folders. These show what they have achieved, new challenges they have participated in and experiences they have had.

The exciting range of challenging activities for children and young people helps to build confidence and keeps them physically fit. The activities are planned to the individual needs of the children and young people, with the ethos of the home being that children and young people can do anything, they just have to find a way. Children and young people have been bowling, canoeing and have visited Gulliver's World. This gives them the opportunity to try activities that they might not be able to do with their families due to their complex needs and behaviours.

There is effective communication between staff, professionals and family members. This ensures that important information is shared in the best interests of children and young people and that care is consistent. This continuity of care helps the children and young people to feel safe and secure.

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

The children and young people who attend the home are vulnerable to abuse and

neglect due to their complex needs and disabilities. Staff are attuned to these risks and vigilant to any indicators of harm. Staff are knowledgeable of the safeguarding processes and have demonstrated this knowledge to raise concerns appropriately. This has been effective in protecting children and young people from harm and ensuring that their needs are met.

Staff have an excellent understanding of the children and young people and are confident in providing their care. The risk assessments and behaviour management plans are clear, up to date and child focused. Staff were observed to be competent in managing behaviour which could pose a risk, utilising a child's behaviour management plan to positive effect. As a result, both staff and the child were safeguarded and the behaviour successfully de-escalated.

Children and young people feel extremely safe and protected due to the proactive working practices of staff. Children and young people are matched with staff members whom they have the best relationships with. The staff provide consistency of care and are intuitive to the children and young people's needs. Through the excellent communication with school and home, children are secure in their routines across all settings.

Due to the complex medical needs of some of the children and young people, staff are required to administer medications including controlled substances. The home's excellent practice ensures that the management of medication is effective and properly accounted for. The robust oversight by at least two members of staff ensures that errors do not occur and children and young people are safeguarded. This practice has been held in high esteem by other providers and services who have visited the setting to learn and model the systems in place.

Physical interventions are required when children and young people exhibit behaviour which is a risk to themselves or others. Interventions are appropriately used to help the child or young person feel safe and to support them to regulate their emotions. Debriefs are held after restraints, and there is clear evidence of incidents being analysed by the manager. Clear actions are shared in team meetings, and updated in the child or young person's risk assessment and their behaviour support plan. Children and young people are protected by robust safeguarding practice. However, there needs to be consistent recording of the length of time an intervention is used for to allow for better analysis of the effectiveness of practice or to identify trends.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is managed by a highly effective and dedicated permanent manager who has been in post since 2013. The manager is an inspirational figure who leads her staff by example, and the staff team shares her high standards and matches her passion and enthusiasm for caring for vulnerable children and young people.

The manager responds quickly and effectively to the needs of children and young people. Where there is a gap in the knowledge of staff, training is sourced quickly to prevent any delay in accessing the service. For example, all staff have recently received oral suction training as a necessary part of a young person's care. This enabled the young person to continue to attend, allaying his mother's fears that his increased need

would exclude him. This focus on training and development also contributes to a staff team that feels valued and takes ownership of its role in caring for children and young people. It is the commitment and unity of the staff team that is a particular strength.

There are fantastic connections to the local community with staff and parents holding fundraising activities and also taking part in local events such as the 'Scarecrow Competition' and the 'Rush-bearing'. The manager takes on an annual challenge, recently climbing in the Himalayas and has been sky-diving. This helps to raise money for the setting which has been used to fund activities, specialised equipment and a wheelchair swing for the garden.

There has been a great deal achieved during this inspection period which is captured in a comprehensive development plan. The plan comes from the extensive consultation with parents, children and young people through a variety of mediums including questionnaires, a private social media group and a monthly parents' consultation group. Feedback from professionals is extremely positive. One social work manager stated that the staff are 'exceptional at bringing [name of the child] into the meetings and clearly enjoy their time with her'.

The manager has an excellent knowledge of the achievements of children and young people. She and the staff have been influential in changing the lives of children, young people and their families through the support that they offer. The comprehensive oversight of the performance of the staff and the home means that they are constantly striving to find innovative ways of working with children and young people to achieve the best outcomes. The vision for the service could be strengthened through better analysis and action planning in the regulation 45 report.

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

Recommendations

- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

In particular, staff should consistently record the length of time that any restraint is used.

- Regulation 45 sets out requirements for the registered person to have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in the regulation at least once every six months; also see regulation 13(2)(h) (the leadership and management standard). The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Reviews should be underpinned by the Quality

Standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.2)

In particular, the review of the quality of care report should evaluate the impact of care on the children and young people using the service. This should demonstrate changing patterns and trends and show how the delivery of care and services has influenced these changes. From this analysis, key themes can be extracted and actions formulated for future development.

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: SC035155

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: Claire Brodie

Registered manager: Jane Stanley

Inspector

Deb Duffy: social care inspector

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