

SC035155

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 operated by the local authority. It provides short-break care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have learning and physical disabilities.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 October 2017

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The children and young people receive very personalised and individualised care in an environment that is nurturing and responsive.
- Parents and carers have confidence in the service and believe that their children are safe and happy there during their stay.

- The manager provides inclusive leadership, which promotes child-centred care practice in the home.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Risk assessments are not reviewed regularly, particularly after any new information becomes known.
- Leaders and managers do not use the feedback they gain from monitoring to identify clear and focused aims, which will improve the quality of care practice and the experiences of the children and young people.
- Leaders and managers do not currently ensure that all the checks appropriate to a care role have been completed before staff work directly with children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
12/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/12/2015	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. This should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- As set out in regulations 31 to 33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Specifically, to ensure that where staff move to a care role from other roles within the home, that relevant references and checks are undertaken.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people receive very attentive care from an experienced and committed staff team. The use of picture exchange systems, visual prompts and technology facilitates communication for those children and young people who cannot communicate verbally. This enables them to make choices about their everyday care. To aid communication, the staff have created individual communication boxes. These contain everything a particular child or young person might need to enable them to communicate during their stay. Individualised table placemats are also used to allow the children and young people to make basic choices by pointing to pictures and to ensure that the staff who are supervising them know their likes and dislikes at mealtimes.

The children and young people, who are able to do so, participate in the life of the home. Two young people recently took part in interviews for a new member of staff and one young person who takes an interest in health and safety has devised a health and safety checklist for the home.

The whole staff team shares the ambition for every child and young person to have a lot

of fun along with new experiences during their stay at the home. They plan for outings and activities that may be difficult for them to have in their day-to-day lives. Feedback from families and carers consistently expresses appreciation for the enjoyment and new experiences that the children and young people have during their stays. A parent said: 'It is like another home for him. He used to be scared of swings but since he started coming he has gained so much confidence on swings and slides, his behaviour is a lot calmer now.'

A focus on the achievement of goals in order to enhance the quality of life of the children and young people is maintained by the staff. Some of these goals lack clarity and detail about how they might be achieved. However, achievements are valued and celebrated well through wall displays and 'outcome books' containing photographs and certificates.

The arrangements for meeting the complex health needs of the children and young people are robust, with detailed information gathered prior to admission. Systems for managing medication are thorough, including effective checking procedures to ensure the safe storage and administration of medicines.

In a small number of cases, there is inconsistent information sharing and partnership working between adult services and the home's staff with regard to transition assessments. This results in staff missing the opportunity to contribute their valuable knowledge about the young person.

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

The children and young people are being kept physically safe in the home through the provision of a high-quality environment. A range of specialist equipment and furniture, such as an enclosed bed and reclining bath, provides the children and young people with comfort alongside safety.

As described in the home's statement of purpose, staffing levels are determined by the needs of each child or young person. The staff also work in partnership with families and health colleagues to provide consistent behaviour management strategies. These measures result in the complex behaviour of some of the children and young people being safely managed.

In response to a recent potential safeguarding concern, the staff team has undertaken refresher training around safeguarding policies and procedures. This also led to improved links with the designated officer, who attended a team meeting. This has enhanced the knowledge and skills of the staff in order to keep the children and young people safe.

All of the children and young people have individual risk assessments in place. However, these are not always reviewed in the light of changing circumstances or incidents. This has not placed any children and young people at increased risk but has compromised the ability of staff to keep themselves safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager leads an appropriately qualified, experienced and committed staff team. The team is appreciative of her support with the result that there is a collaborative approach to all aspects of practice in the home. The staff are supported through regular supervision, which identifies any training needs and issues with their well-being.

A child-centred approach permeates into care practice. The children and young people receive an enthusiastic and warm welcome from the staff, who are attentive to their needs and comfort during their stay. The manager knows each of the children and young people personally and has a highly visible presence in the home.

Supporting documentation is variable in quality and some documents are missing from placement files. This does not impact directly on the care of the children and young people but results in a lack of clarity around certain aspects of a child or young person's care or situation. More auditing of placement plans would identify where information is missing or needs updating so that care is based on full, up-to-date information.

The staff have access to a good range of training opportunities. In line with the home's statement of purpose, staff are also able to access additional specialised training to ensure that the specific needs of every child or young person can be met effectively, such as gastric feeding.

The manager has systems in place to gather the views of children and young people, their families and other professionals. The home also receives regular scrutiny from an independent visitor. However, these views do not lead to clear, detailed action planning that will further improve practice and the experiences of the children and young people.

Both the manager and the staff build positive relationships with families and carers. This enables them to offer support in areas beyond the provision of short breaks, for example supporting families at medical assessments or in times of crisis. A parents' group meets regularly and they have created a Facebook page, which is being successful in engaging with a significant number of parents and carers.

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: Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider's address: Northgate House, Halifax HX1 1UN

Responsible individual: Anne Tully

Registered manager: Jane Stanley

Inspector

Janet Black, social care inspector

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