

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	11 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC061005
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council
Registered person address	City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1HY

Responsible individual	David Byrom
Registered manager	Position vacant
Inspector	Stella Henderson

Inspection date	11 July 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC061005

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- The home has been without a registered manager for more than 26 weeks. A requirement to address this has not been met.
- A second requirement for the independent visitor to form a view about young people's safety and well-being has not been met.
- Young people who are not in full-time education do not have sufficient learning opportunities to help them to make good educational progress.
- Young people need more help to develop their skills to meet the challenges of adult life.

The children's home strengths

- Young people benefit from the stability, security and nurturing attention of staff. This enables them to make good progress in most areas of their development.
- The majority of young people are well supported to go on to further or higher education or prepare for the world of work.
- Young people's cultural and religious needs are recognised and very well met. There is particularly good support for unaccompanied asylum-seeking children.
- Very effective partnership working with parents and professionals enables young people to receive good all-round support from people who want the best for them.

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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must appoint a person to manage the children's home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)) Specifically, ensure that the manager's application to register with Ofsted is submitted without delay.	13 August 2016
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— (a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation. (Regulation 40 (4)(a))	13 August 2016
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— (a) children are effectively safeguarded; and (b) the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a) (4)(a) and (b))	13 August 2016
The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))	13 December 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff must help each child to prepare to live independently ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27).
- Specifically, set new objectives for young people to develop and extend their

existing skills for independence.

- Where children are not participating in full-time education, ensure that the child is engaged in suitable structured activities ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15).
- 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).
- Specifically, ensure that the content of risk assessments is simplified and that all actions to be taken to reduce risk are included.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17 February 2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13 July 2015	Full	Good
21 January 2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
28 May 2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The majority of young people are in full-time education. Some are coming to the end of their secondary education and have begun apprenticeships. Others are looking forward to continuing their studies at college or university. One young person currently receives home tutoring for six hours a week, but outside of this has no structure to her week around education. This limits her learning opportunities and the chance to develop new skills. Young people are at various stages of their preparation for independence. A recommendation to improve the content of their pathway plans has been met. Young people have accomplished many of the basic skills that they need for adult life. Planning for independence could be further improved by setting new objectives for young people. This would enable them to develop new skills to address the more complex aspects of adult life. The home offers young people the chance to experience real stability over the long term. This gives them the chance to develop close attachments to staff and from this nurturing base to tackle the difficulties that they face in life. Along with specialist help from children's mental health services, this enables young people to enjoy much improved emotional and psychological health. Young people are supported to look after their health and they do so successfully. Two young people have stopped smoking and drug misuse is diminishing. All young people achieved a 'Level 1' in alcohol and substance misuse after attending training sessions provided by the local substance misuse team. Young people make good connections to their local and wider community, developing friendships and making links to religious and cultural centres that are important to them. Young people's day-to-day experiences are generally similar to those of their peers. They like to keep fit, visit friends and take part in the many activities that are on offer at the home, such as going to drama club, the gym, holidays, visits to the cinema and playing computer games. The quality of staff support, advice and guidance that young people receive adds real value to these normal day-to-day activities. It impacts positively on young people's progress and provides them with opportunities and experiences that enrich their lives. Importantly, it gives young people and their families hope for the future. One parent said, 'Thanks to the home we will be able to move on and have a normal family life.'	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe at the home. Parents and professionals agree with this view. One parent said, 'I do think my child is safe here. I fully trust the staff to keep him safe.' An asylum support professional commented, 'I was impressed that, when I visited, they checked out who I was, where I was taking the young person and what time we would be back.' The risks that emerge because of young people's behaviour, vulnerability or past experiences are very well understood. Staff take effective action to reduce risks such as running away from home, self-harm, behaviour that is a risk to others and child sexual exploitation. All of these risks are significantly reducing and young people, and others in the community, are safer as a result. A recommendation to review and update risk assessments has been met. These assessments could be further improved by simplifying their content and ensuring that all actions being taken to reduce risks are included in these documents. The positive attitude of staff and the warm, nurturing relationships that they have with young people is a key strength of the home. This impacts positively on young people's behaviour. One parent said, 'Their positive approach is rubbing off on my son.' Overall, young people's behaviour is well managed. Where physical restraint has been necessary, this has been undertaken in an appropriate and safe way. During a particularly testing time for the home, some young people felt unhappy about how individual situations were being managed. They were confident enough to use the home's complaints procedures to highlight their worries. Young people's concerns were listened to and appropriate action was taken to address this matter.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
Leadership and management are judged as inadequate as the home has been without a registered manager for more than 26 weeks. Two requirements set at the last inspection have not been met. This was to ensure that the current acting manager completed her application for registration within required timescales and for the independent visitor to clearly state whether or not young people are safeguarded and their welfare promoted. These requirements are raised again to ensure compliance with the regulations. Notification of serious incidents is generally sent without delay, but the home has	

not informed Ofsted about young people who may be at risk, or subject to, child sexual exploitation. This has no impact on young people as they are protected from such risks, but failure to notify Ofsted impacts on the ability of the regulator to take action on such matters if necessary.

Day-to-day monitoring of young people's progress, safety and well-being is good. There is a good deal of reflection on what is going well and what needs to be changed or adjusted. Young people contribute to this process, along with their parents and professionals. The manager's six-monthly report does not reflect or evaluate this extensive consultation. A requirement is set to address this matter.

Young people clearly benefit from the expertise, skills and knowledge of the staff team. This has enabled each of them to make demonstrable progress, including those who have been at the home for only a short amount of time. A social worker said, 'Staff have played a crucial part in X's success.' One parent commented, 'My child has not been at the home for very long, but already we are beginning to see positive changes in his attitude and behaviour.'

The acting manager has extensive experience in residential childcare and has the required level 5 qualification in leadership and management. All staff are appropriately qualified for their role. They are a well-established team, supported by effective supervision and relevant training.

Partnership working with parents and professionals is a key strength of the home. A social worker appreciated the 'excellent two-way communication'. And an independent reviewing officer said that staff, 'Keep in very regular contact with me.' Parents said that staff kept them informed about what is going on for their children. One parent said that staff were, 'Fabulous! They keep in contact with me and are very supportive. I owe them a lot. They have given me my son back.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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