
Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	13/07/2015
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	Mr David Byrom
Registered manager	Ms Gillian Martin
Inspector	Ms Hussain

Inspection date	13/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	The home was subject to compliance at the last inspection.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC061005

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people's basic care needs are met in the safe, warm and relaxed home environment.
- Instances of missing have reduced since the last inspection.
- Young people make overall progress in many aspects of their life including in education. Some young people are aspirational and have personalised support to maximise potential.
- Young people have many opportunities to engage in positive social and recreational activities helping them maintain good health.
- The staff team invest time in young people, listen to them and encourage positive behaviours.
- The diverse and caring staff team promote young people's religious and cultural beliefs.
- Staff have access to good training and support to meet the challenging needs of young people. They have good relationships with professionals and use them to access further support and insight into young people's behaviours.
- Practices in the home have improved since the last inspection however, missing practices and record keeping continue to present some shortfalls.

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/s 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(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare This is in specific relation to missing young people and encouraging their safe return home	31/08/2015
8: The education standard In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure – (a) that staff – (i) help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; (viii) help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible	07/08/2015
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purpose of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirements in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard) (Regulation 46 (1))	31/08/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- The children's guide should help children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner (The Guide to Quality Standards, paragraph 4.22, page 24)
- Where children are not participating in education because they have been excluded, the registered person must help the young person resume full time education as soon as possible. If no education place is identified by the local authority, the registered person must challenge them to meet the child's needs under regulation 5 (The Guide to Quality Standards, paragraph 5.15, page 28)
- Children must feel safe and be safe. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would (The Guide to Quality Standards, paragraph 9.9, page 43)

Full report

Information about this children's home

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2015	Interim	Declined in Effectiveness
28/05/2014	Full	Good
14/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress
11/09/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The children's home has made significant improvements since the last inspection. It now provides young people with a safe home environment with good levels of stability. The dedicated staff team know the children well, invest time and effort in them to keep them safe and protected from harm. Young people develop good relationships with adults. They identify with trusted staff to discuss their concerns. Staff talk to young people after school about their day-to-day experiences. Staff invest time with young people giving a clear message that they are interested in them. A member of staff said, 'We care about young people. The building may not look great on the outside, but staff are dedicated to young people.' The staff team are good at rewarding young people's efforts and achievements. This ranges from chocolates to overnight, out of city visits. Three young people recently enjoyed sightseeing and shopping in London. Another young person enjoyed a relaxing overnight stay in Harrogate. Such considered rewards make young people's efforts worthwhile while reinforcing the message that staff care about them and recognise their hard work. Young people access advocate support. They develop respectful and caring relationships benefiting significantly from positive time together. A young person's advocate has been a consistent feature in her life for over two years. They go out for pampering sessions, walking and have meals together. The advocate states, 'Sometimes we don't do anything but just sit together. We don't without even have to talk. It's really nice because we just enjoy each other's company.' Staff provide opportunities for young people to engage in a range of social and recreational activities including gym membership, playing rugby, kickboxing, free running and dancing. They recognise talent and potential in young people and drive young people to pursue their interests and hobbies. Some young people thrive on these while others lose interest or avoid such energetic activities. For these young people, staff provide them with opportunities to go swimming and alternative more gentle exercise to promote good health. Young people access routine health care. Their immediate and long-term health care is managed through local services. Specialist support including mental health, sexual health and drug services provide direct input with young people to help them recognise and manage their complex behaviours.	

Young people enjoy healthy balanced meals. These are prepared in line with young people's religious and cultural beliefs. Some young people adopt a halal diet and observe Ramadan in line with the Muslim faith. A social worker commented, 'Young people's identity and cultural needs are well met here. Staff go out of their way to bring food in for young people. One staff member goes out of his way to take his key child to mosque with him even when he is not in work.' This enables young people to partake in spiritual gatherings, exercising their right to follow their chosen faith while integrating in the local community.

Advanced planning of new admissions affords new young people opportunities to have tea and overnight visits prior to admission. Transitions are generally in line with the same ethos promoting positive endings allowing young people time to understand the need for change. The exceptions to this are when young people's safety and wellbeing is compromised. These unplanned endings are rare and aim to safeguard young people given their missing and unsafe behaviours.

Education outcomes are mixed. In comparison to starting points, some young people make good progress learning to read, write and tell the time. This leads to improved confidence and a skill set necessary for daily life. Some young people are ambitious and talk about having professional careers and going to university. They benefit from private tuition helping them maximise potential and raise aspirations. One young person states, 'The extra support has helped me to improve my grades. I am now getting higher grades than expected.'

Young people not in education have declined outcomes. Some young people refuse to attend while others experience exclusions. In these situations, staff liaise with schools to identify alternative provision and escalate concerns to the virtual school head. However, this is not always effective or timely at ensuring young people receive appropriate educational input.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Missing logs and records following episodes of missing are not always good or consistent at providing accurate accounts of events. A social worker confirmed saying, 'Sometimes little details get missed on records.' This affects professionals in their actions and their ability to safeguard. Staff show a good understanding of the concerns relating to missing behaviours however risk to young people is not always effectively minimised. For example, a young person was reported missing to the police following their failure to return at a given time. Records do not reflect any attempts to locate them through	

telephone calls with the young person or to their family members and friends. This is despite the young person having shared their intention of not returning to the home for the night.

Responses from staff to missing young people are not always child centred and consistent. One young female refused staff sending her a taxi and walked home at night stating she did not feel safe alone in the taxi. Some staff are not always child focused in their response. This means actions are often ineffective at reducing harm. Although staff practices have improved since the last inspection, they are not always robust and consistent in ensuring the safety and wellbeing of young people.

Return interviews are undertaken either by staff at the home or the police. Young people are not always forthcoming with sharing information about their whereabouts. Their engagement with risk taking behaviours such as missing's and alcohol misuse makes it difficult for staff and professionals to implement strategies in keeping young people safe. However, the staff team are aware of young people's risks and vulnerabilities and demonstrate this in young people's risk management plans.

The staff team work closely with safeguarding professionals, in particular, social workers, missing people's coordinators and the child sexual exploitation team. They communicate appropriately to share intelligence and concerns. This enables professionals to build a profile of young people and their contacts and develop strategies to manage these risks. A social worker states, 'There is good communication between professionals. Staff are flexible in accommodating visits and always engage in attending strategy meetings.'

Some staff members are trained to undertake direct work with young people at risk of sexual exploitation. This allows young people to talk to people who they know and trust in addressing safeguarding concerns rather than working with strangers with whom they have no existing relationship.

Physical interventions have reduced. The staff promote positive behaviours in young people using good relationships and incentives as rewards. As a result, the home provides a calmer and more relaxed atmosphere.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The home provides effective leadership through a permanent and highly experienced manager who has been in post since the home opened in 2004. An	

assistant manager deputises in their absence. There are immediate plans for the Registered Manager to leave the service although, at this time, a replacement manager has not been identified.

The home shows capacity for ongoing improvements based on its performance since the last inspection. Staffing levels are good in that they meet the needs of currently placed young people. The highly experienced and settled staff team are qualified in the childcare award. New staff members receive a good induction. The team are supportive of each other.

Independent monthly auditing complements the managers internal monitoring of the home. This process collectively enables senior staff and managers to swiftly identify and address shortfalls promoting the quality of care provided to young people. The Registered Manager states, 'Staff find the independent visitor very useful. She is very good at spotting things before they become a major issue. She is direct in her approach and helpfully provides practice knowledge and research to staff to help them in their role'.

Complaints are actioned and responded to whether they come through internal or external routes. The manager and staff team learn from placement successes and breakdowns. This supports them to challenge senior managers and professionals effectively regarding admissions.

Staff feel equipped to meet the needs of young people. They engage in a variety of training ranging from e learning to multi-agency training. When asked how they meet young people's differing needs, a staff member said, 'Some of it comes naturally but we have training which keeps us up to date in practice. We are involved in training with CAMHS and CSE staff who often come to our team meetings. I am confident that I could deal with many situations. I have my own experiences that strengthen my position.' Intervention from specialist services provides staff with opportunities to discuss practice issues while updating their knowledge of interventions and behavioural triggers.

Care plans are comprehensive and subject to timely review by the staff team. This keeps them in line with young people's changing needs and behaviours. Progress is clearly documented enabling staff and young people to reflect on targets and outcomes and take appropriate action.

The home's location assessment is not complete although liaison with professionals has been undertaken. The Children's guide does not provide accurate details on how children can contact the Office for the Children's Commissioner.

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 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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