

SC061005

Registered provider: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to six children who have a range of social, emotional and behavioural needs. Two children are currently living at the home.

The manager has been registered since July 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 15 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 May 2021

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 25 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: During the full inspection, an urgent case review was held on 19 May 2021. The social care regulatory inspectors shared

their evidence of the serious and widespread systemic failings. A decision was made to suspend the service with immediate effect.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The children living at this home are not adequately protected from harm and, as a result, are at risk of actual and/or potential harm. Leadership and management of the home is poor. This has a negative impact on the overall experiences of the children.

There are inconsistencies in staff recording and children's daily experiences are not accurately documented. Children are frequently out of the home for many hours each day with their whereabouts being unknown. Staff are not proactive in keeping in touch. This places children at significant risk of harm through known links to gangs and criminal exploitation.

The children's care plans are out of date and lack detail. Staff are not provided with guidance and direction on how to meet children's needs. It is unclear what progress, if any, children are making.

There are no structured key-work sessions with children. Staff's discussions with children are not accurately recorded. Staff miss opportunities to have discussions with children about issues that affect their lives, such as the death of a friend. It is not clear what children learn from their discussions with staff.

Repairs are not completed in a timely way. This includes broken furniture in one child's bedroom. One child had no wardrobe and their clothes were stacked on the floor. Some areas of the home were dirty and untidy. This does not create a homely environment, or provide children with a message that they are valued.

The kitchen is locked at night so children cannot make themselves a snack if they are hungry. This door leads to a fire exit, and in the event of a fire children are unable to exit the home safely. This is a health and safety hazard and could impact on the health and well-being of the children.

The children are attending school and college and have up-to-date education plans.

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

There are serious weaknesses in safeguarding practices at the home. The staff's day-to-day care is not delivered consistently to keep each child safe and protected from harm.

Positive support plans, which include the children's risk assessments, are ineffective and of poor quality. They do not provide staff with clear direction and guidance. Some of the other documents, such as the missing from home protocol, provide contradictory guidance to staff. This does not enable staff to safeguard children.

The number of times children are missing from home are not known by the manager or staff. This is due to the inconsistencies in staff recording. The missing from home protocol for one child was dated September 2020. Staff do not have up-to-date and clear guidance around their responsibilities when children go missing. There are repeated examples of staff not looking for children when they are absent from the home, including when children leave the home late at night. This puts the children at risk of harm and exploitation.

Staff do not respond appropriately to incidents that occur, such as contacting the police two days after a child received a threat to their life. Failure of staff to report these incidents immediately leaves children at immediate and significant risk of harm or death from others.

Information held at the home about children's risks and their whereabouts is not collated so there is no clear picture of what dangers the children are exposed to. External agencies working with the children are not provided with accurate information to help inform their work, for example the true extent of one child's missing episodes. This under-reporting results in multi-agency action to safeguard children being flawed.

There have been incidents of a serious nature, including occasions when staff have needed the assistance of the police. These incidents were not notified to Ofsted, which prevents the regulator from having oversight.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There is poor management oversight at the home. The manager has failed to ensure that staff keep clear and accurate records of the experiences of children. This means the manager cannot analyse and evaluate the effectiveness of the actions taken. Managers and senior managers are not aware of the safeguarding risks to children.

The manager's monitoring systems are inadequate and have resulted in poor care arrangements for children. One child regularly misuses cannabis and, on occasions, alcohol. This is not challenged by staff and the full extent of his drugs misuse is not known.

Significant and widespread failings in the management and leadership arrangements mean that staff are not provided with clear direction on what action they must take to keep children safe. The manager and staff presented as desensitised to the level of risk to children.

The independent visitor has only completed virtual visits to the home, and feedback has not regularly been sought from others, such as children's families or other professionals. This does not provide independent oversight and scrutiny. Ineffective monitoring of the home has led to a decline in the quality of the care, support and

accommodation delivered to the children. This has had a negative impact on children's experiences and has placed children at risk of harm.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) 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 person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— - understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; - use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— - ensure that staff— - understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; - protect and promote each child's welfare; - treat each child with dignity and respect; - provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(vii)) The registered manager must ensure that any damage is repaired quickly and all areas of the home to be kept clean and tidy.	20 June 2021
* 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; - help each child to understand how to keep safe; - have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;	20 June 2021

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))	
* 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 work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; and 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)(b)(c)(e)(f)(h))	20 June 2021
The registered person must ensure that – children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and	20 June 2021

allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b) (c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) The provider must remove locks to the kitchen which prevent access to the fire exit. Locks should not be on communal areas and any that remain need to be clearly risk assessed and rationalised.	
* The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the missing child policy") setting out— the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission; and the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, so absent. Before implementing, or making an amendment which the registered person considers to be substantive to, the missing child policy, the registered person must— consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person; and— have regard to any relevant local authority or police protocols on missing children. (Regulation 34 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	20 June 2021
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; and there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	20 June 2021
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. 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— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1)(4)(a)(b))	20 June 2021

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC061005

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council, City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford, West Yorkshire BD1 1HY

Responsible individual: Mark Trinder

Registered manager: Subtan Nazir

Inspectors

Tina Ruffles, Social Care Inspector

Brian Wood, Social Care Inspector

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