

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

The home is operated by the local authority. It is registered to provide care for up to five children with a range of social and emotional difficulties. There were five children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 3 May 2022.

Inspection dates: 31 January and 1 February 2023

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/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 11 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2022	Full	Good
18/05/2021	Full	Inadequate
25/02/2020	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/07/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Children have made progress however significant shortfalls in leadership and management and in ensuring the safety and protection of the children means that overall experiences are judged inadequate.

A full complement of staff means that children receive stability from the staff caring for them, this encourages positive relationships to develop as children know the adults who are looking after them.

All staff have been trained in the local authority's chosen therapeutic model of care. However, this is not embedded across the whole team. One professional and one staff member commented that some staff are not working with the model. This means that children experience inconsistent care.

Staff support children to access education and attend school. Staff have supported children to move to schools that suit their needs better. One of the children has achieved good exam results. Staff advocate on children's behalfs if a service is not meeting their needs. Children are supported to develop independent living skills at their own pace. One of the children was proud of the work that they have been completing in preparation for moving on.

Children enjoy a wide range of hobbies and activities that reflect their interests. Children's views about where they live are largely positive. Most of the children are happy living in the home. The registered manager is reviewing how the children's opinions can best be captured, as the current children's meetings are not productive and do not contribute to improvements in the home.

Children's health needs are met. Children are encouraged to take age-appropriate responsibility for their health. Children are supported to develop emotional resilience and discussions with staff and specialists take place to help children understand their feelings.

Children spend time with people who are important to them. The children's rooms have been recently redecorated and furnished to their tastes.

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

Staff have not ensured that children are protected. Potential ligature hazards have not been removed from the home despite the manager being aware of the known risk to several of the children. The inspectorate was notified of two incidents of children threatening self-harm with ligatures, and on both occasions, Ofsted was assured that the home had been made safe.

Some staff have demonstrated a poor understanding of their responsibilities to safely manage and to respond consistently to children's behaviour. Staff's failure to follow a child's individual plan led to a child being harmed. Staff did not apply the principles of the home's model of care and this resulted in a child's behaviour escalating in response to being held. The continuation of the incident in an unsafe place, at the top of the stairs, resulted in both a staff member and the child being injured. The records and discussions in response to the incident show an inappropriate element of blame.

Inaccuracies and inconsistencies in the body map completed by staff do not clarify the size and appearance of the marks on the child or the location of the incident. No medical advice was sought for the child, despite them having marks on their body as a result of the injury. This does not ensure children are safeguarded effectively.

The staff involved did not recognise the incident as one of physical intervention. In addition, the refresher restraint training for one of the staff involved had lapsed. Inconsistencies in the accounts of the staff involved and of the child do not promote clarity and good safeguarding practice.

The quality of children's plans is not consistent. When risk assessments are updated the information is not always readily available to staff. The manager cannot be assured that staff are familiar with changes to children's plans. This means that information about the steps staff should take in response to concerns may not be known to them.

There has been a reduction in children going missing. For most children, there are clear plans for staff to follow when children's locations are unknown. However, for one child, their separate missing safety plan was not in their file. There was also confusion as to whether it was current, with one staff member confirming it was not up to date. This means that staff do not always have the most recent information needed to help children to be located quickly.

The manager has taken steps to improve the response to allegations, using an internal investigation to speed up the process. Relevant agencies, including the local authority designated officer were informed of an allegation against a member of staff. However, there was an initial delay in accurate information being shared with the manager. This does not provide assurances that children are adequately safeguarded in a timely way.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home is managed by a qualified and experienced manager. The management team is aspirational for the children. Professionals acknowledge that there are strengths within the staff team. However, the manager has not ensured that all staff use the therapeutic model of care well. This means that children do not experience a predictable and consistent response from the adults around them.

The manager has taken steps to reduce the number of changes within the staff team. This includes shift patterns being altered to increase consistency for children. Staff spoken to were positive about the support that they receive. Staff are not consistent in the care they provide to children. Staff receive regular supervision, and team meetings take place on a frequent basis.

The manager has not consistently evaluated practice to ensure that intervention was safe, proportionate and necessary. Although the manager was aware of the incident of restraint, she had not ensured that staff made a record of this in line with the provider's model of physical intervention. This was a missed opportunity to address some of the shortfalls in practice as well as the importance of addressing inconsistent recording with staff through supervision.

The manager has not ensured that there are systems in place to ensure that the training of all staff, particularly in relation to restraint, is up to date. This makes it difficult for the manager to check the status of staff training and to have an overview of which staff require refresher training.

There are shortfalls in the system that the manager uses for monitoring the quality of children's records and if staff have read updated information. The manager had not identified that one child's plan contained out-of-date information. The safety plan for another child, following its update in November, had been moved to a separate file for staff to read and sign. However, only three staff signed to confirm they had read the plan since that date. This means that some staff do not have a full and current understanding of the steps that they are to take to help and protect children. The provider has been slow in their response to addressing weaknesses and confusion in paper files as this shortfall was also identified by the independent visitor in November 2022.

What does the children' 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' 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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; and de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(xi)) The registered person must ensure that the actions of staff are consistent with children's plans and do not result in situations becoming unsafe to either children or staff.	19 March 2023
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;	19 March 2023

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; 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 are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(i)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(d)) The registered person must ensure that all staff recognise unsafe practice. The registered person must ensure that injuries are accurately recorded and that medical assistance is offered to a child as needed. The registered person must ensure that children's risk assessments include all the information that staff need to support children to be safe. The registered person must ensure that children cannot access items that present a hazard due to children's known risks.	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— 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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(c)(h))	19 March 2023

The registered person must ensure that they have a system in place to identify and address shortfalls in practice. This includes whether staff are completing documents in a detailed and accurate way. The registered person must ensure that the training of all staff is current and that staff deliver care that is consistent with the home's model of care.	
Restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing— injury to any person (including the child); serious damage to the property of any person (including the child); or Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (1)(a)(b)(2)) The registered person must ensure that staff only use physical intervention when it is in accordance with a child's plan and is necessary and proportionate.	19 March 2023
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and	19 March 2023

a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

The registered person must ensure that staff understand their roles and responsibilities and recognise when they have used physical intervention. The registered person must ensure that any incident of restraint is correctly and accurately recorded so that it can be properly evaluated.

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: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Registered provider address: City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford BD1 1HY

Responsible individual: Picklu Roychoudhury

Registered manager: Laura Bennett

Inspector

Laura Grundy, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2023