

SC066120

Registered provider: Leeds City 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. The home provides care and accommodation for up to five children or young people who have learning disabilities and who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 January 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 13 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- The young people receive exceptional care, which is tailored to their individual needs and wishes.
- The young people are able to make choices in their day-to-day lives and express their feelings. This is because the staff are extremely innovative and proactive in finding ways to gather the views of young people and then act on them.
- Research-informed practice makes a difference to the lives and experiences of the young people.
- The young people are kept safe by exceptional care that is provided by diligent staff. This high level of care meets their complex health and behavioural needs.
- Leaders create a culture of high aspiration and positivity in order to improve the lives of the young people. This is echoed by the staff team.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The six-monthly review of care would be enhanced by greater use of the feedback obtained from the young people and others. It should focus on the experience and progress of the young people. This will enable better reflection about ways to improve the quality of care being provided.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/01/2017	Full	Outstanding
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/01/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. Reviews should be underpinned by the Quality Standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations and quality standards', page 64 paragraph 15.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The young people living in the home benefit from the strong and trusting relationships they develop with the staff. The young people identify strongly with their key workers and have a sense of belonging and permanence. The young people are treated with the utmost dignity and respect by the staff who view them with whole-hearted warmth and positivity.

The wishes and feelings of the young people are meticulously gathered and consistently acted upon. For some of the young people, communication is reliant on facial expression and body language. The staff record and interpret their responses, using their in-depth knowledge of each young person. This ensures that there is some choice and control in the day-to-day life for all young people, whatever their needs. A member of staff is taking part in a project with the social work team and children's rights team around children's voice and influence. This project has adopted some of the methods and practice from the home. This practice will also be disseminated to other homes in the area. This is testament to the exemplary practice in this home.

The staff keep a focus on the progress of the young people, celebrating all their achievements large and small. Strong partnership working with schools and health colleagues has resulted in all the young people demonstrating achievements. The majority of the young people were displaying challenging behaviour when they moved into the home. This has either ceased or reduced markedly for all the young people. One young person regularly sets off fire alarms in public places and school. Through creative and direct work using photos, the young person has stopped this behaviour. The school report of another young person who has very complex needs said that the young person was exceeding expectations and 'interaction was increasing day by day'.

Some of the young people have extremely complex health needs, and these are managed well by the staff. Staff are guided by clear documentation and have efficient communication systems within the team, which ensures that the young people receive the correct care for their needs. The young people learn about a healthy diet and

exercise. The staff are very attentive to the dietary needs of the young people, helping them to gain or lose weight as is required for their individual good health. Some young people have lost weight, which has been positive for their health. For other young people, who need to gain weight, staff have successfully introduced new foods, reducing the need for supplementary feeding. This has resulted in young people sustaining a healthier weight.

The staff are determined that the young people have varied experiences, whatever the challenges posed by their needs. Extensive planning enables those with the most complex health needs to spend time away on holiday. Young people have chosen holiday destinations and enjoyed breaks in the Lake District, Kielder Forest and Whitby. All of the young people attended an event at the Leeds football ground. They looked resplendent in bow ties and party dresses.

Transition work for those young people who are entering or leaving the home is particularly strong. The young people are consulted on their wishes about the number of visits they have, who accompanies them and what will help address any concerns. Excellent recording and partnership working results in the young people feeling a sense of control and reassurance about their move. The staff also ensure that the other young people living in the home are well prepared for relationships ending or new arrivals. This is outstanding practice that makes a stressful time much less distressing for the young people and their families.

The young people maintain relationships with families and previous carers where appropriate. One parent said she is 'totally happy' with the care her child receives. She feels welcomed and supported by the staff and involved in her child's day-to-day life.

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

Keeping the young people safe is a priority for the staff team. Staff know the young people thoroughly and can predict and recognise changes in their mood and behaviour. The staff are skilled in diverting the young people from incidents of frustration or anger. As a result, restraint techniques or sanctions are not used at all. This is a significant achievement, given some of the challenging behaviours the young people have exhibited in the past.

The young people are protected by appropriate supervision and healthcare that meets their complex needs. The staff have received specialist training around rescue medications to ensure that they can respond quickly and confidently to an emergency. Medication is stored and administered effectively. There have been no medication errors since the last inspection.

The management of risk is underpinned by individual and up-to-date risk assessments, which ensures that the young people receive a consistent and proactive response to any risks. The excellent transition process for admissions ensures that any risks associated with a young person are well known before admission.

Staff take the initiative to enhance their own development. The senior staff researched information around bullying and safeguarding and delivered it to colleagues on a team away day. This training was successful in engaging the team and increasing their understanding of the subject. This will enable the staff to protect the young people in their care more effectively.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager has been overseeing development at another home in recent months, and senior staff have been undertaking some of his role. This has been managed in such a way that it has not impacted on the young people and the excellent standards previously set have been sustained. The manager has passed on his ambitious and inspirational attitude towards the young people to the whole team which constantly strives to improve its practice.

The staff team is exceptionally stable and experienced, and feels well supported by management. The staff are entrusted to generate creative ideas and lead on their implementation. For example, one member of staff has worked with a volunteer to enhance the outside area, engaging the young people in every step. As a result of the teamwork between the young people and staff, the garden has won a gold award in the Britain in Bloom competition.

Supervision of the staff is regular and supportive. The staff exhibit a positive attitude to constructive challenge and learning. They attend a wide variety of training to support the needs of the young people. Two senior staff are involved in assisting the training department to review and modify new courses. All of the staff spoken to articulated that their central purpose at work was to give the young people the best in every way.

Care is delivered in line with the home's statement of purpose. While leaders and the staff team are proactive in gathering feedback, particularly from the young people, outcomes from this are not reflected in the six-monthly review of care. There are missed opportunities for staff to reflect and learn from the highly effective work they do with children and the difference they are making to their lives.

The working relationships with families, schools and other agencies are commendable and ensure that the young people receive the best possible care and outcomes. Social workers were fulsome in their praise for the care young people receive. One social worker said: 'The home is regarded extremely positively throughout the whole service.' Another social worker said that she can't praise staff enough.

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: SC066120

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Registered provider address: 40 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3DL

Responsible individual: Stephen Walker

Registered manager: William Nealon

Inspector

Janet Black, social care inspector

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