

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	13/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC066120
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Leeds City Council
Registered provider address	3rd Floor, St George House, Great George Street Leeds LS1 3DL
Responsible individual	Stephen Walker
Registered manager	William Nealon
Inspector	Cath Sikakana

Inspection date	13/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The home has continued to meet the diverse and complex needs of young people, due to the dedicated and experienced staff group. Young people are happy and continue to flourish, making notable achievements relative to their learning needs. For one young person, achieving in such areas as using public transport and eating meals with the other young people has considerably enhanced their social integration. Young people enjoy regular contact with their families. The home goes 'above and beyond' in developing and maintaining relationships with parents. For some parents, this includes spending quality time at the home in the acknowledgement that, for some young people, parents will be a vital source of support when they reach adulthood. Providing a nurturing and learning environment for parents is a key strength of the home and promotes better outcomes for young people. The manager and staff have been proactive in arranging, for one young person, contact with grandparents who live some distance away. This has now resulted in regular video calls. The home has experienced a period of stability with no new admissions or discharges since the last inspection. Introductory planning is now underway for the admission of a young person. This is being managed sensitively and in recognition of the potential disruption that this could cause the young people already in placement. Individualised care planning is in place to ensure a smooth transition that incorporates the views of parents, the young person and the social worker. Careful, thorough and thoughtful planning is in hand to prepare one young person for the transition to adult services. This includes the recognition that this event will be an emotional time for all young people in the home, as significant relationships have developed. Staff have been instrumental in devising a plan that involves the identified key worker from the adult provision visiting the home to start building a relationship with the young person. The young person is fully involved in the process and is using a calendar and visual aid to minimise any anxieties in his move, to what he calls, 'the big boy's home'.	

Young people are safeguarded effectively due to the high standards of care. The young people have 'grown up' in the care of the same staff group, so staff know the young people well, along with their presenting risks and vulnerabilities. The use of physical intervention is rare. In the event of a crisis situation, staff implement a 'restorative team approach', using methods of: 'redirecting, diversion and de-escalation'. As one senior member of staff commented: 'We all know each other's strengths and weaknesses. We have a fantastic relationship with the young people, and have a good understanding of safeguarding practices underpinned by procedures.'

Ascertaining the views, wishes and feelings of young people is a key strength within the home, through 'voice and influence' work. The recent changes in the home's environment, the choice of colour, themes and the design of the new lounge, are based on collective decision-making.

The ethos and style of management promote a culture of openness and transparency. There are effective and robust communication and monitoring arrangements in place, with health, education and a range of specialist services, to secure good outcomes for young people. A nutritionist has recently visited the home to advise on healthy eating and weight reduction. This has resulted in one young person experimenting with new tastes and gradually adopting a healthier lifestyle.

The manager knows the home well and demonstrates a strong commitment to improving the quality of care. This clearly results in better outcomes for young people. The manager and deputy manager recently visited similar homes to share ideas and good practice. Good staffing ratios enable young people to enjoy regular activities in the community; a trip to London on public transport was enjoyed by all.

The recommendations identified in the last inspection have been met. This has seen a more concise, qualitative report from the manager, incorporating the views and achievements of the young people. The fire evacuation procedure has also been amended to record the young person's understanding of the procedure.

Information about this children's home

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2017	Full	Outstanding
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/01/2016	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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