

SC066796

Registered provider: Wakefield Metropolitan District Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home can provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people whose plan is to live in a medium- or long-term residential setting. This home is managed by a highly experienced and appropriately qualified registered manager who has been registered with Ofsted since 2014.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 November 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 26 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2019	Full	Good
15/03/2018	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/09/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people receive good-quality care from the committed and stable staff team. The caring staff invest time and effort getting to know the children and young people. This helps those newly admitted to the home settle quickly. The children and young people have positive day-to-day experiences and enjoy spending time at the home. This offers them stability and security and the children and young people develop trusting relationships with staff. One child spoke of how much she loves her bedroom as it makes her feel 'snug and cosy'.

The children and young people make progress from their starting points, especially with improvements in their emotional stability and reduced risk-taking behaviours. They have mixed responses to education, particularly for those children and young people with disrupted school histories. However, one is attending college, another is engaging with home tutors and the staff use opportunities to bring informal learning to those waiting for formal education.

The staff are excellent role models for the children and young people. The staff use informal discussions, residents' meetings and structured key-working sessions to provide support and guidance to children and young people. Staff challenge negative views in a safe environment, which leads to some children and young people being more understanding and tolerant of others.

The staff team's resilience and commitment to the children and young people results in their carefully planned moves from the home. The children and young people are involved in the planning and preparation so they have a good experience of moving on to their next home. For one young person, this meant they could move back to their home town, and another was able to personalise the bedroom at their new home before moving in.

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

The staff understand the children and young people's risks and vulnerabilities. These are clearly outlined within the detailed and individualised behaviour management plans. The staff are intuitive and recognise when there are subtle changes in a child or young person's presentation. They can often predict negative or risk-taking behaviours. This allows the staff to sensitively intervene and appropriately challenge the children and young people while following the individual strategies identified in behaviour management plans. This is helping to reduce self-harming behaviours and substance misuse.

The children and young people are vulnerable to exploitation. The staff team has good relationships with safeguarding professionals and staff attend regular strategy meetings. This provides a multi-agency approach to keep the children and young people safe. Professionals work together to share information. For one child, this collaborative

approach resulted in immediate police intervention to identify an unsafe adult and to keep the child and others safe from exploitation.

The children and young people's missing-from-home episodes reduce. The staff follow the individualised and detailed missing-from-home protocols and make efforts to try to locate the children or young people if they abscond or if they are late returning. Good collaborative work with the police helps to find the children and young people quickly. The return to home interviews give the children and young people the opportunity to reflect on their actions and for professionals to share information, enabling them to identify and act to reduce risk.

The staff team has a good understanding of the children and young people's backgrounds and their behaviours. The staff work well with professionals to take a multi-disciplinary approach, giving the children and young people a strong, clear and consistent message about keeping them safe.

The staff spend considerable time educating the children and young people about known risks and talking about sensitive issues. They use age-appropriate and creative methods to engage the children and young people in informal discussions and key-work sessions. Group sessions also help staff to address topics such as bullying and safe relationships. The staff encourage positive social skills and behaviour, which children and young people develop over time.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The well-respected registered manager has extensive experience of working in residential care. He is highly dedicated and provides strong and effective leadership. The management team's open-door policy makes the managers visible in the home and helps their passion to promote children and young people's outcomes filter down to the whole staff team.

The approachable manager is child-focused in his decision making and work with the children and young people. He knows them well and they have developed good relationships. The children and young people enjoy spending time with the manager and voice any concerns or complaints directly to him. He listens to their views regularly and he chairs the residents' meetings. This makes the children and young people feel valued and listened to.

The manager's thorough monitoring and review of documents ensures that he has an excellent oversight and understanding of the children and young people's targets and outcomes. The staff's recording is detailed and comprehensive and kept fully up to date. This helps with the manager's auditing and ensures that the staff's care and support to young people remain exemplary. When shortfalls are identified, the manager is proactive in engaging and robustly challenging other agencies and professionals, particularly in respect of safeguarding the children and young people.

Staff receive regular and reflective supervision. They benefit from team meetings that

also model reflective practice discussions. The staff benefit from high levels of support from the manager and feel valued. The staff have extensive knowledge about the issues affecting children and young people in their care but continue to benefit from ongoing training and support. They are committed to their personal and professional development, which is aligned with a comprehensive organisational development plan. Some staff have progressed to more senior positions at the home. The retention of staff promotes consistency and helps the provider continue to develop the home. The children and young people's relationships are also not disrupted.

The well-established staff team works hard, and as a cohesive team the staff work well together. The team consists of strong and capable individuals who are confident in their role. They have a tenacious approach of not giving up on the children and young people and strive for the best possible outcomes. The committed staff team is motivated to provide the best possible care to the children and young people. This was recently recognised, with the staff receiving a local authority 'Highly Commended Top Team' award which has motivated them even further to remain aspirational for children and young people.

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: SC066796

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Wakefield Council, County Hall, Bond Street, Wakefield, Yorkshire WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Mark Nevill

Registered manager: Ian Henderson

Inspector(s)

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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