

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 has changed its statement of purpose during this inspection cycle from short-break respite care to a medium- to long-term home. The change came into effect in January 2019. The home can provide care and accommodation for up to four children or young people. The staff aim to provide a stable environment so that children and young people can develop physically and emotionally.

This home is managed by a highly experienced and appropriately qualified registered manager who has been registered with Ofsted since 2014.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 February 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: 15 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2018	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/09/2016	Full	Good
10/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making excellent progress in the short time they have been here. Children have a clear transition plan when coming to the home. If this needs to be changed for the best interests of the child, then the staff are proactive and demonstrate a child-focused approach from the start. Children receive good information about what to expect and are supported to settle in. Robust safety plans are in place to immediately ensure that children are safe. These are reviewed and revised regularly so that children can make progress and take risks appropriately.

Children's educational progress is a priority. Staff support children to reintegrate into school and to maintain full-time attendance and good attainment. Children's health needs are quickly identified, and creative solutions found to presenting issues. Where access to services is slow, management are quick to challenge and escalate issues so that children get their needs met.

Children have good relationships with staff. They described them as 'fun', 'nice' and 'supportive'. Children are at the centre of their care at this home. Their rooms are personalised and are decorated to a high standard. Routines and boundaries are in place, which helps create a homely and relaxed environment where children are thriving. Children are appropriately involved in planning and shopping for healthy meals and they stated that the meals are 'good'. Children are regularly asked their opinions and views and these, in turn, influence care planning and practice within the home.

Children have good-quality life-story books, documenting their journey from before and after arriving at the home. Pictures of the children doing activities are displayed in the home. This shows that children are valued, and staff spoke proudly of children's achievements.

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

Children feel safe in this home. Staff support children when safeguarding issues arise in the community. Children feel listened to and said that staff act to keep them safe. Care plans, safety plans and safeguarding procedures are robustly followed. For example, room searches are sensitively carried out in line with children's risk assessments. Children are fully informed of the reasons why this action has been taken, and these are clearly recorded. Communication with other professionals and family is regular and meaningful. This ensures that everyone is working together.

Positive behaviour and boundaries are clear and consistently applied. Staff are proactive in offering activities to support children's development and well-being, for example children attend a local community meditation group to help them relax and sleep.

Children have not been missing from the home, although the staff are clear what procedure to follow should this occur. The risk posed to children who are at risk of child

sexual exploitation have reduced. Children are protected online and from other media devices by robust security systems that are specifically tailored to keep children safe.

Staff at the home have good links with local police officers, which helps promote a positive image of the police. Children have access to an independent advocate who, after meeting the children immediately commenced wishes and feelings work to ensure that their voices are listened to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is ambitious and has high expectations for all children and staff at the home. He has successfully managed the transition from a short-break service to the medium- and long-term home. Staff morale remains high and they feel very supported by the management team. Staff celebrate children's achievements and work flexibly yet consistently to support children. Staff receive a comprehensive training and development offer. This is a strength within this home. A new staff rota is being piloted following feedback from children and staff. This demonstrates that management listens and acts to provide the very best care for children.

The registered manager is quick to challenge other services and professionals when they are not providing services to meet children's needs. Management and staff are very proactive in addressing children's needs and wishes. They are strong advocates for children. Staff receive regular supervision and have access to other professionals to both ensure that their own well-being is addressed as well as ensuring that they are providing high-quality care for children.

Children's case records are very thorough and well organised. They clearly detail work which is undertaken with children. Children's plans and goals are well communicated so that all staff and other professionals are working together effectively to help children achieve.

The manager ensures that all notifiable events are provided to the regulator. There is a very thorough independent visitor who supports the improvement and development of the home. The leaders and managers have sought out opportunities to be involved in external learning events and to visit other settings to broaden and build on their knowledge and expertise. They have brought these ideas back into the home, facilitating the culture of continuous development.

Throughout this inspection, all professionals, staff, families and, most importantly, children have been very positive about the care that this home offers. As one child said, 'It's like we are one big team, one big family.'

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: County Hall, Bond Street, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF1 2QW

Responsible individual: Mark Nevill

Registered manager: Ian Henderson

Inspector

Rachel Holden, social care inspector

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