

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 is registered to provide care for up to four children whose plan is to live in a medium- or long-term residential setting.

The previous registered manager left on 20 December 2020. There is an acting manager in post who is not yet registered.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 27 and 28 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 April 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2019	Full	Good
26/02/2019	Full	Good
15/03/2018	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The majority of the children are settled and enjoy living at the home. The staff demonstrate patience and understanding, and this helps those children who struggle to trust adults who look after them. One professional said, 'Staff have supported [name of child] to trust people. Their efforts are commendable.'

The change in the layout of the home promotes children's access to all areas. Children are no longer frustrated at being locked out of the office. The children enjoy spending time with and chatting to the acting manager who is very 'hands on' and accessible. The children have developed good relationships with the staff who are positive role models for the children, with one child saying, 'The manager is like a father figure to me.' This helps the children to have a real sense of belonging.

The children make progress in different areas of their lives. The staff team is consistent and staff persevere to instil the importance of daily routines with clear boundaries. This gives children a predictable day and contributes to their sense of security.

All the children are attending school, college or receiving home tuition. The children are ambitious and have plans for their futures. This is because they are supported by staff to achieve their goals.

Children feel listened to and involved in their planning. This is through informal discussions or spontaneous children's meetings. One child is passionate about children's rights and staff encourage him to represent his views and opinions to the local authority to help inform future planning for other children. The child has asked that staff no longer wear their identification badges when out in the community.

One child's ensuite bathroom has a problem with ventilation resulting in signs of mould. Prompt action has not been taken to decorate his new bedroom so that he can move out of this damp room. This significant delay could result in the child experiencing health issues.

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

The manager completes detailed impact risk assessments when a child is referred to the home. These risk assessments look at the current peer group to compare the children's risks and vulnerabilities. As a result of safe matching, children live in a calm and settled home. They spend time with each other and engage in positive activities both in and out of the home.

There are occasions when children go missing from the home, although the frequency and duration of these occurrences have reduced. When children are missing, staff remain in contact with them and swiftly pass on any intelligence to the police about the places the children are visiting. This ensures good information

sharing and ongoing assessment of risk. One safeguarding professional said, 'A child has a sense of safety which he hasn't had before.'

Staff use planned key-work sessions to provide children with information to educate them about things, such as the dangers of substance misuse. The children are encouraged to talk openly with staff about their relationships with others, so that staff know who they are associating with.

The children's ability to manage their emotions has improved due to staff giving the children techniques to keep calm. Staff promote positive behaviour through praise or instant and planned rewards. Staff support children to understand how their behaviours can affect others. This leads to children seeking ways of repairing relationships, such as asking to help wash a staff member's car or saying sorry to their peers.

There is good monitoring of the children's access to the internet and social media sites. A weekly activity report identifies which sites the children are visiting. This helps to stop children using inappropriate sites and makes sure access is age appropriate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The acting manager has been in post since January 2021 and his application to register has been received by Ofsted.

Since working at the home, the acting manager has developed a good understanding of the children through spending time with them. The staff and children talk positively about the new manager and the changes he has made. Professionals speak of the improved culture at the home, which they consider is making the home more child friendly and nurturing.

Improvements have been made to the home's systems and processes such as the introduction of new monitoring tools. This includes looking at previous incidents when children have been unable to self-regulate their behaviour, the responses of staff, and staff's learning from these situations. This helps staff recognise how their behaviour can affect a child's response and when changes are needed.

The acting manager has completed a review of the home's paperwork systems. The manager's scrutiny of the staff's recording, together with staff training, has led to improvements in the quality and recording of key-work sessions with the children.

Staff receive regular supervision and attend team meetings, sometimes with the involvement of others, such as the emotional well-being team. This enables staff the opportunity to reflect on their practice. Staff speak of feeling refreshed and have a renewed enthusiasm for their work as a result of the new acting manager.

The requirements from the last assurance visit have been met and the staff have now completed their updated safeguarding training. However, the manager has

implemented action plans as there are staff members who have not completed the required residential qualification within the mandatory timescales.

The last review of the location risk assessment was completed in 2018. The acting manager has received information from other agencies about the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the home. This still needs to be presented in a report format to identify the current risk factors in the area.

What does the children's 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's 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(vii)) This relates to the delay in decorating a child's bedroom which has mould caused by ventilation problems in the ensuite bathroom.	1 June 2021
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	1 September 2021

This relates to two staff members who have not completed their qualification in the necessary timescales.	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46 (1))	1 June 2021

Recommendations

- The registered provider should understand that children in residential care may be worried about being stigmatised or bullied by their peers for being 'different' because of where they live. The registered person should make sure that staff do not wear their identity lanyards in the home and while out in the community with the children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.13)

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: 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: Post vacant

Inspector

Tina Ruffles, Social Care Inspector

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