

SC486606

Registered provider: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home is registered to provide care for one child who may have social and/or emotional difficulties. This home provides emergency, short-term or medium-term care. One child with complex emotional health needs currently lives at the home.

The registered manager has been in post since July 2022. The registered manager was not available at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 October 2022

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 17 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/11/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/08/2021	Full	Inadequate
09/03/2020	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Serious failures in safeguarding practice and the leadership and management of the home have resulted in the overall experiences and progress of children being judged as inadequate. The provider failed to have sufficient managerial oversight of staffing arrangements and the use of restraint practice. This could have resulted in the child being significantly harmed.

A team of agency mental health nurses and the provider's own staff work in partnership to care for the child. Staffing shortages and instability have impacted on the child developing secure relationships. A decision to reduce the number of different staff working at the home has helped the child to develop more trust in the team. Words used by the child capture how they now feel about the adults who care for them. The child said, 'staff listen', 'happy' and 'they support me'.

Education is available to the child through home tutoring from an independent tutor. However, staff have yet to identify and establish strategies to help the child cope with their anxieties associated with education. This limits the child's engagement and future prospects.

Staff support the child to maintain a consistent routine which gives the child a sense of what to expect. Verbal and visual prompts from staff help the child to adhere to the structured activities arranged throughout the day. This has helped to improve the child's personal care routine, and there has been a reduction in anxiety-related behaviours.

The child's parent values the support they receive from staff when they visit the home. The level of supervision and guidance from staff helps to improve the child's experience of spending time with their family.

Staff share information about the child's experience with the allocated doctor from the child and adolescent mental health service (CAHMS). The working relationship with CAHMS allows for a frequent review of the child's emotional and behavioural needs, and an evaluation of the child's medication needs. This is helping to ensure the child's medication is aligned with their needs.

The staff use a car to support the child's everyday needs. However, the car is labelled with the provider's name. This can stigmatise the child as they are transported around by the staff.

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

Agency mental health nurses commissioned to work at the home have worked excessive hours on several occasions. This includes them working back-to-back

shifts, often over 24- and 48-hour periods, at this and another home linked to the local authority.

Incidents of restraint and holding the child for their own safety are frequent. The agency staff are trained to use advanced techniques with the child. However, the provider's own staff and managers are trained in a different model of physical intervention. This does not provide the child with a consistent response when they need to be held.

The quality of the records relating to the holds is extremely poor. They lack the necessary detail and are not consistently recorded in line with the regulations. There are several gaps in the records that do not meet the expectations set out in the Children's Homes Regulations. Information is missing about what led to the hold and how long the child was held for. Some of the debriefs with staff and children do not provide clarity on who has completed them and they also lack detail.

The managers' oversight of the restraints does not fully explore the incident. This is because the managers are not trained in the advanced techniques used by the agency staff. This means their management oversight and evaluation of records has been made in the absence of them having a detailed understanding of the model used. This does not ensure that the child has been kept safe, or that staff practice is safe, and neither does it align with the ethos of the home as identified in the statement of purpose.

The provider has failed to ensure that they consistently follow the safer recruitment procedures. Consequently, the vetting of agency workers has been ineffective, and some staff have been deemed as suitable to work with children without their history being fully evaluated or risk assessed. As a result of this inspection, the provider is taking action to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Staff take action when missing incidents occur to help the child to return to the home. They work in partnership with the police to reduce the child's associated risks when missing.

There has been a reduction in the frequency and intensity of behavioural incidents for the child. Improvement in the child's routine, high levels of staff supervision, and a more consistent language used by staff when communicating with the child have helped to reduce the likelihood of the child feeling emotional dysregulation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The management arrangements at this home have failed to provide sufficient oversight of the team and the quality of care. The manager is also registered to oversee another home. She is supported by an acting deputy manager who has more of a presence in this home. The lack of presence from the registered manager in this home has contributed to the serious shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home.

Staff have not had regular practice-related supervision. There is no evidence that the acting deputy manager has had supervision since commencing their role in the summer. Those providing supervision to staff have not had the necessary training to do so. This does not help staff to be effective or cope with the demands of their role, or consider how they can improve their practice.

Staff speak to the managers and are debriefed following incidents with the child. However, the quality of these records is poor. They lack curiosity and do not demonstrate if they help staff to evaluate the effectiveness of their practice, or if there has been any learning from the event. The lack of exploration by managers also limits the learning the team can achieve.

Team meetings are held, but the quality of the minutes is extremely poor. Notes lack structure and are incoherent. This makes it difficult for staff not in attendance to understand the team's discussions. Minutes do not show how staff reflect on their practice or how they plan for the care the child needs.

There is no system for verifying the training requirements of the agency mental health nurses working with the child or when their training should be refreshed. Training records for the local authority's own staff are out of date and still contain the details of staff who have left. The system has failed to ensure that current staff have up-to-date training on behaviour management and restraint. This does not ensure that staff are suitably skilled to meet the needs of the child safely.

The provider's internal monitoring system is ineffective and does not help managers identify and take the necessary action to address shortfalls. A lack of scrutiny by managers has led to several gaps in the administration and management of the home. For example, missing supervision records, no tracking of hours worked by staff, lack of aligned training and disorganised records for the child. In addition, the managers' review of the home's statement of purpose has not identified out-of-date information in the document. Important details about managers and information about associated professionals is not current. This does not allow the regulator or stakeholders to have an accurate picture of the service the home provides.

The good practice recommendation in relation to consulting with children, families and relevant professionals, as part of the quality of care review, is still not met, and has therefore been repeated.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(d)(f)(h)) The registered person must ensure that managers have the necessary training and skills to evaluate restraint incidents. The registered person must devise a system to review and monitor the working rota and hours worked by agency workers. The system must allow managers to evaluate agency workers continue to be safe to work with children.	18 December 2022

The registered person must make the necessary management arrangements to ensure that there is sufficient training, supervision, guidance and direction for staff. The registered person must devise a system to review and monitor all aspects of the home to enable the manager to take any necessary action. The registered person must ensure that they have in place recruitment systems for agency staff members which are underpinned by safer recruitment practice. The registered person must ensure that managers understand the system and their recruitment responsibilities. The registered person must review all agency staff recruitment files, to ensure that they have followed safer recruitment practice as outlined in the regulation.	
The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b)) The registered person must ensure that information in the document about people is current, and that details of how the children are cared for reflect the current service provided.	18 December 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	18 December 2022
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure;	18 December 2022

a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
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* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when completed the quality-of-care review, that children, families and other prevent professionals are consulted as part of the process. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

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: SC486606

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered Provider: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Registered provider address: City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford BD1 1HY

Responsible individual: Picklu Roychoudhury

Registered manager: Laura Bennett

Inspector

Aaron Mcloughlin, Social Care Inspector

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