

SC488679

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a local authority. The home provides care for four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

Three children were living at the home at the time of the inspection. Two children were spoken with.

The manager was registered with Ofsted July 2025.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 July 2025

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: 17 April 2024

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
17/04/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/06/2023	Full	Good
13/03/2023	Full	Inadequate
16/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children engage in activities with staff in and outside of the home, which helps them to build trusting and positive relationships. Children also benefit from regular involvement in community-based activities such as, horse riding and visiting youth clubs.

Children are supported to explore and develop their hobbies and interests. For example, staff have helped one child to design a website. Staff supported one child to design a website which gave the child a sense of pride in what they achieved. The child spoke passionately about this, and keenly explained the website's purpose and function.

Two children spoken with at the inspection said that they like living in the home. One child said, 'Things here have got a lot better now.' Both children said that they like the staff and that they can speak to them if they need support or help with anything.

Children's incentive charts provide a clear and effective visual aid that helps them to understand and recognise their achievements. Staff record the reasons for any deductions, which supports transparency and helps children to understand the process. The format is effective. Furthermore, when deductions are made, staff carry out direct sessions with the child, allowing them to express their views and ensuring that they fully understand the reasons behind any decisions made.

The manager takes appropriate, and timely action when children face barriers to learning. She works effectively with other professionals to ensure that their educational needs are met. For one child, this has resulted in a change of school that is better suited to meeting their needs.

Staff support the children to attend their routine health appointments. Children are all generally fit and healthy. To encourage children's understanding around health knowledge, staff speak with them about the dangers of substance misuse, and other specific health conditions.

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

Risk assessments in place are individual to each child. They include detailed actions and responses for staff when they are faced with challenging situations. The risk assessments include running logs of children's actions. This helps staff to monitor behaviours, which helps them to identify whether risks are reducing, or increasing in frequency, and from there an appropriate response is taken.

When children go missing, staff follow plans in place to ensure that children are located as quickly and safely as possible. When they return, children are welcomed back by staff, and an independent person is brought in to speak with the child. This approach

reinforces to the children that the adults around them are concerned for their safety and well-being.

There have been serious incidents in the home that required police involvement to help manage children's behaviour. In response, the manager has reviewed and improved staff practice in managing challenging situations. Staff have been supported to develop their skills in de-escalating situations and now respond more effectively using verbal redirection, in line with children's risk management plans. As a result, incidents in the home have reduced, and the use of police intervention has declined.

Physical interventions are rarely used in the home. When holds are used, they are appropriate and proportionate. Records are in line with regulations and give an accurate account of the antecedents, the hold and how it was followed up.

There have been incidents of bullying in the home. Staff speak with children about bullying behaviours and their impact on others. However, these conversations have not been effective in stopping the bullying, and one child has expressed that at times they do not like living in the home. There has been a lack of creative strategies to address the bullying, with staff primarily relying on discussions and on-the-spot challenges.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has worked hard to develop the home since the previous manager left. She has put in place clear boundaries for staff to follow, to provide children with routine and structure in their daily lives. This has taken time, and the transition was not without challenges, including serious incidents and staff injuries. However, staff have remained consistent in their approaches and have followed the manager's guidance. Now, children are living in a less chaotic environment and have routine and boundaries in place.

Staff supervision sessions are frequent and reflective of the children's needs and of staff practice. Staff use these sessions to their advantage as they discuss their training needs. It is also a safe space for staff to discuss any practice issues within the team. This shows that staff are comfortable in sharing open and honest discussions with management. Staff spoken with said that they have regular supervision and that they feel supported by the manager.

To enhance staff skills and development, all staff are up to date with the provider's mandatory training. Staff also receive child-specific training, on topics such as substance misuse. Staff say this training reinforces and underpins their knowledge and skills to support them in their roles.

The manager has identified gaps in staff completing their qualification in timescales. Appropriate action has been taken to ensure that this matter has been dealt with by the local authority.

The manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the home and takes necessary action when issues arise. There is an action plan in place to move the home forward, and all of the requirements that was issued at the monitoring visit have been met.

Children's views are actively sought and listened to through a variety of methods. Children contribute their opinions during house meetings and have access to an independent advocate, which some children have used. Staff support this process by helping children make the initial contact with the advocacy service. From that point onwards, children are encouraged and supported to maintain contact independently.

The home requires five full-time members of staff to meet children's needs. To promote consistency for children, the manager regularly uses the same two agency staff. Staff from the sister home also provide support, and permanent staff from the home cover additional gaps in the rota to maintain continuity of care. A recruitment drive is ongoing. Two candidates have been successful and are currently progressing through the safer recruitment process.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xii)(xiii)(b))	25 August 2025

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: SC488679

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Registered provider address: Merrion House, Merion Centre, Leeds LS2 8LX

Responsible individual: Benjamin Finley

Registered manager: Collette Mountford

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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