

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>26/01/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC406505</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Leeds City Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Leeds City Council, Childrens Services, Merrion House, 110 Merrion Centre, LEEDS, LS2 8DT</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Mr Stephen Walker</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Vacant</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Pauline Yates</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>26/01/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Improved effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

## SC406505

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people with complex needs, benefit from the good quality care they receive whilst at the home. The short breaks and shared care they enjoy, are well planned by staff, and care is tailored and individualised.
- Young people make progress from their starting points across different aspects of their lives. This progress includes greater levels of self-care, independence skills and increased social awareness. Families, Independent Reviewing Officers (IRO) and social workers are positive about the service and the benefits it brings to young people's lives.
- Young people have trusting relationships with staff and this enables them to feel secure and enjoy their stay at the home. They are offered activities that they enjoy and this supports their social development.
- Staff have good insight and knowledge of the needs of young people and their methods of communication. As a result, young people's needs and wishes are understood and this influences the care they receive. Young people's health needs are understood and fully met during their stays.
- Young people's education is supported and there is a good level of liaison between the staff and schools. This ensures that staff understand progress or changes that occur for young people between their stays, and that future stays are well informed.
- The manager offers good levels of leadership and ambition for the staff team. He is supported by experienced and committed staff in providing a responsive and improving service to young people and their families.

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

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether- children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	29/02/2016
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1)) With particular reference to including the experience of staff	29/02/2016

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.10). With particular reference to the decoration within young people's bedrooms being reflective of and more focused upon young people's interests and wishes.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4) With particular reference to key-worker records and direct work being reflective of suitable planning and, being focused upon agreed outcomes. In addition, that documentation employed for the summary of progress, is uniform for all young people.
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified

and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.2) With particular reference to the frequency of supervision being in line with organisational expectations.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 12 children and young people who have learning difficulties, physical disabilities and sensory impairment. Children and young people stay at the home for short breaks and on a shared care basis.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/11/2014	Full	Outstanding
03/02/2014	Interim	Good progress
30/05/2013	Full	Good

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>Young people receive good care that is responsive and attuned to their needs. The staff are skilled and insightful with regards to young people's preferences and means of communicating. As young people become more confident in expressing their needs and, having those needs met, incidents of frustration have diminished. One social worker commented, 'Staff are very patient with her, they do not try to rush her. They go at her pace and make sure she is safe and others are safe. They have a good rapport with her.' Another social worker commented, 'What I have found is that previously she would be screaming, now she is a lot calmer and definitely progressing. She has made relationships with staff.'</p> <p>Young people make progress in their social skills and this better prepares them for transition into adulthood. It also enables them to have fun and enjoy a wider range of community activities such as shopping, pantomimes, sea-life centres and days out at the coast.</p> <p>Young people learn to accept others and the routines that occur over the course of a day. For example, one young person who previously was unable to tolerate meal times, now partially participates by standing at the door and being willing to place her used plate in the sink. Young people also learn other skills such as assisting with laundry and simple food preparation. One social worker commented, 'Those things are massive for her. Here, it's like a new lease of life.' The persistent patience of the staff enables young people to learn at their speed and over time achieve greater levels of independence. For example, some young people have progressed to recognising the need to use a toilet, and this reduces the need for intimate personal care.</p> <p>Young people enjoy trusting relationships with the staff and this allows them to accept direction and try new things. One parent said, 'He loves the staff.' A social worker commented, 'She is very autistic and has challenging behaviours. She has a great relationship with her keyworker who really understands.'</p> <p>Parents retain overall responsibility for young people's education and this is supported by the effective liaison between staff and schools. Staff ensure that young people's education continues to be promoted during their stays. This is achieved not only through their attendance at school, but also through play. Young people have access to both in-door and outdoor equipment, arts, crafts, books and computers.</p>	

Parents maintain responsibility for the health needs of their children, but these are met well when young people stay in the home.

Young people are consulted about their preferences and staff utilise a variety of methods for those who do not communicate verbally. This takes place via key-working sessions, meetings and consultation surveys. As a result, young people make choices about what they want to do during their stay and these views are respected.

The staff develop clear placement plans for the young people, alongside professionals and parents. These identify targets for young people and key-workers take responsibility for updating any information that may impact on that plan. This information is further disseminated throughout the staff team via meetings. This ensures that young people's care remains relevant and specific to their needs. Some key-working recordings, however, lack analysis and evaluation. For example, attempts made by staff to introduce new forms of communication to young people are not clear with regards to the preparatory or future work to progress this goal. In addition, newly introduced documents to better capture the progress of young people are not yet fully embedded across all files.

Young people enjoy a home that is well-maintained and spacious. It is suitably furnished and appropriately equipped to meet the specific needs of young people. However, bedroom colour scheming and décor is very limited and is not influenced by young people. Their input would enhance their time spent at the home and be more reflective of their interests and wishes.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>The staff provide high levels of supervision for young people. This ensures that their vulnerabilities are effectively managed in order to reduce specific and general risks to their welfare. Professionals and parents are of the opinion that young people are kept safe at the home and that their safety is a high priority. As a consequence, the risks to young people associated with strangers or child sexual exploitation does not feature in their lives.</p> <p>Staff effectively employ strategies to support positive responses from young people and reduce the frequency and duration of stressful responses. One social worker commented, 'She feels secure at the home. She used to target animals or children and can be aggressive. There have been no incidents of this and the home are very good at preventing her from fixating and not over-stimulating her. She is definitely safe.' Physical intervention is rarely used and is only ever employed when</p>	



necessary to keep the young person or others safe. Another social worker commented on the progress of one young person, 'She used to self-harm, sensory things like nipping and pulling hair. They are really good with strategies.'

Young people's safety, and staff response to presenting behaviours is underpinned by clear and individualised risk assessments. Staff understand each young person's vulnerabilities and risks. Their support and vigilance ensures that young people become increasingly safe. There have been two missing from home incidents since the previous inspection. On each occasion, staff responded decisively and liaised with other professionals in a timely manner. Staff are recruited safely and this reduces young people from being exposed to adults who may pose a risk. Health and safety checks are carried out regularly in the home, and these ensure young people are not exposed to unnecessary accidents or hazards.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>The manager is currently in the process of seeking registration. He is extremely committed to improving the care offered to young people. The manager is social work qualified and is very knowledgeable about the needs of young people with complex physical and emotional difficulties. He is respected by other professionals and leads an experienced staff team. The individual needs, characteristics and strengths of each young person is understood well by the manager and this insight underpins the child-centred approach that is taken to the running of the home.</p> <p>The manager makes himself easily available to staff, young people and professionals and his presence is felt within the home. One social worker commenting upon the improvements since the manager's appointment said, 'It has undergone a very positive shift and lots of my colleagues have also said this. They are a lot more flexible now and I feel they are more child-focused. The manager is really good, helpful and supportive.'</p> <p>The manager provides a high level of support to the staff and encourages a problem-solving and creative approach to the care of young people. One member of staff commented, 'He encourages people to challenge and speak their minds but also to be solution-focused. Since he came this has improved tremendously.' The manager is enthusiastic and ambitious for the care and services to fully respond to young people's needs and the needs of their families. As a result, a greater number of young people have benefitted from the services that the home offers. One parent wrote, 'We feel a huge benefit already.' The strengths and weaknesses of the home are fully understood by the manager, and this insight has driven the changes, resulting in an open and responsive service.</p>	

Young people new to the home experience well-planned and thorough admissions that ensure their needs are met and they benefit from the care given. Staff are observant and thoughtful in responding to young people's unique needs and communication patterns. This sensitive approach means that young people make progress and important milestones are achieved. A particular strength of the home is the attention afforded to young people's preparation for transition into adult services. The manager and staff work hard to ensure that this is incremental and attuned to young people's capacity for change.

The manager has established good oversight of the care that young people receive and addresses in a timely way improvements that are required. For example, training has been organised for staff on the particular and specialised needs for one young person. The staff are given suitable support and feedback via supervision, team meetings and day to day contact with the manager. There are however gaps in the supervisory process for some members of staff, although this does not impact upon the safety or welfare of young people.

The independent monitoring visits to the home are in accordance with prescribed timescales and offer an overview of the home. They do not however specifically comment on whether young people's welfare is appropriately safeguarded. This is a breach of the regulation, however, has minimal impact upon young people. The statement of purpose has been reviewed and updated for the home, but it omits to describe the experience of the staff.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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*.

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