

Children's homes inspection – full

Inspection date	26 April 2016
Unique reference number	SC033457
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Leeds City Council
Registered person address	40 Great George Street Leeds LS1 3DL

Responsible individual	Stephen Walker
Registered manager	Francis N'Jie
Inspector	Shaun Common

Inspection date	26 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
<p>The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.</p>	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good

SC033457

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Robust and individualised plans are implemented by staff to meet the young people's needs. As a result, young people make exceptional progress.
- Staff are skilled at forming and maintaining strong, trusting relationships with young people, even in very challenging circumstances.
- Healthcare and health promotion are strong in both care and education, with a range of initiatives to encourage young people to adopt healthier lifestyles.
- Young people are very well supported to develop positive social skills and behaviour. There is a strong focus on restorative practice.
- Managers understand young people's needs very well. They know the home's strengths and weaknesses and have devised an accurate and reflective 'position statement' on which to base their ongoing work.
- Excellent partnerships with relevant agencies and professionals ensure that care provided to young people is of a high standard and delivers outstanding outcomes.
- The home offers excellent facilities for young people both for day-to-day living and in education.
- Young people are offered, and provided with, an extensive range of leisure and enrichment activities that they benefit from and enjoy.

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 persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that, within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the matters set out in the regulation; specifically, ensure that all managing away incidents are clearly and accurately recorded in line with the regulation, unless a young person has an EHC plan that exempts the home from the recording requirement (Regulation 35(3)(4)).	31 May 2016
Ensure that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that staff undertake appropriate continuing professional development; specifically, maintain up-to-date training and qualification records for all staff (Regulation 33(4)(a)).	31 May 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Develop the home's effective working relationships with relevant persons which may include services, individuals (including parents), agencies, organisations and establishments that work with children; specifically, develop policies and procedures in line with the government's 'Prevent duty guidance', pages 6 and 7, sections 30 and 40 ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.3).
- Records of restraint should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child; specifically, ensure that records consistently identify positive practice as well as lessons learnt, and that debriefings with young people are more detailed to help identify causes, triggers or what would have helped, in order to inform behaviour management plans and risk assessments better ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59).

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice; specifically, they should ensure that the local authority's human resources department promptly provides the registered manager and/or relevant staff with the information about checks carried out under regulation 32 and schedule 2 ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1).
- Ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care; specifically, ensure that reports of visits evaluate the care provided, provide the visitor's opinion on all aspects inspected and report effectively to show the home's strengths and areas that it needs to improve ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5).
- Ensure that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care; specifically, that staff can easily and readily access all of the children's home policies and procedures ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20).
- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn; specifically, develop and introduce a system in education to record and monitor progress made over time of the personal skills development of young people ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn; specifically, provide more challenge in mathematics encouraging young people to progress to higher-level qualifications ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn; specifically, increase the number of accredited qualifications in vocational training ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn; specifically, ensure that all young people arrive at lessons on time ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 24 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to 16 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and eight young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 and who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under 13 years of age under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 requires the approval of the Secretary of State. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

This inspection has the purpose of informing the Secretary of State of the continuing suitability for this provision to operate as a secure unit to restrict young people's liberty.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16 January 2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31 July 2014	CH - Full	Good
12 December 2013	CH - Interim	Inadequate progress
1 May 2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Outstanding</p>
<p>Young people make exceptional progress. They benefit from comprehensive initial assessments completed within days of admission, and development of robust and individualised plans that are implemented by staff to meet their needs.</p> <p>The experiences that young people have while living in the home have a positive impact on them and, for many, can be life changing. A young person stated, 'I wasn't in a good place when I came here. I leave soon and feel as though I have a future.' One young person complimented staff stating, 'They are good. They really care. I'm doing well now.'</p> <p>Staff are skilled at forming and maintaining strong, trusting relationships with young people who are often in a state of crisis and have histories of rejecting authority. Staff work through the most challenging circumstances in a systematic and non-judgemental way, to gain trust and foster relationships. One young person presented with extremely challenging behaviours. Staff developed and implemented a clearly focussed plan, and showed sensitivity and tenacity in working with the young person. The number of incidents has dramatically reduced as a result of this work. It is the strength of these relationships that underpins and supplements other areas of work, which, in turn, encourage young people to make significant changes to their previous lifestyles.</p> <p>This strength is recognised by other professionals. For example, the social worker of a young person who had an extremely difficult time when first settling into the home said of staff, 'They have gone over and above in the way they have managed and reduced her behaviours. They have never given up despite the challenges thrown at them.' Another social worker stated, 'Staff here pulled everything together, quickly getting to grips with the very complex situation and they have pulled out the best in her.' The parents of a young person coming to the end of their placement commented to an inspector, 'This has been the right place for him.'</p> <p>Although young people are at different stages of their journey, the progress that they make is exceptional. For example, a young person with a history of rejecting education and all forms of authority, and who was initially challenging and uncooperative, is now more settled and stable, and is making excellent progress. This is described by his social worker who stated, 'He has made so much progress. Previously he was not in education. Now he has a real positive outlook on his</p>	

future, has shone in his education and is taking exams.' Another young person spoke at length about how he has successfully completed a range of individualised work aimed at addressing offending behaviour and said that his views have changed through him adopting a different lifestyle. He has progressed by engaging positively in a range of projects, work experience and a successful mobility plan.

Case management, planning and transition are well coordinated. Young people engage in a series of planned, programmed work that is individualised and aims to address previous behaviour. Excellent consultation with young people allows them to evaluate their own progress, with plans and strategies reviewed regularly to keep them relevant and up to date. This gives young people ownership and a greater commitment to planning for their futures.

Young people confirm that they are consulted regularly and can contribute positively to aspects of daily life. For example, weekly meetings, in which issues are discussed, take place on each unit, and young people make suggestions. Minutes from the meetings reflect the action taken by staff, although these need to be recorded with greater consistency. Senior staff meet regularly with young people who are nominated representatives from each unit and called the junior leadership team. These young people feel influential when representing the views of their peers. For example, minutes from a recent meeting show progress in revising and improving menus, following consultation with the chef manager. Young people also take an active part in the recruitment of staff. The high levels of consultation and the influence that young people have are very positive and give them a sense of belonging and of feeling valued.

Young people understand the complaints procedure, and how to access it. Complaint forms called 'Can I have a word?' are freely available. Discussion with a visiting independent advocate confirmed that they support young people with complaints. Young people can contact advocates without the need to ask staff.

The organisation of and arrangements to promote young people's health is an area that has improved significantly since the previous inspection. For example, there has been an increase in substance misuse support and mental health provision, which is now available five days a week. Day-to-day health needs are met by a full-time nurse, who is supported by visiting doctors, a dentist and an optician. Young people now have excellent access to general and specialist services. This has led to improvements in young people's health and well-being.

Health promotion is strong, with a range of initiatives to encourage young people to adopt healthier lifestyles, for example, advice on healthy eating, weight management, fitness, sexual health and substance and alcohol misuse. As a result, young people's physical, emotional and psychological health needs are well met.

Excellent facilities allow a wide range of activities to take place, which young people engage in and enjoy. These include sports, fitness, games consoles and

cooking. Young people are introduced to new experiences as well as having existing interests supported.

Young people benefit from mobility programmes undertaken in line with their assessed needs. These allow young people to prepare for their return to the community through engaging in activities and community programmes. Young people have wider opportunities and experiences, which aid their development. For example, a number of young people have attained bronze and silver levels of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. This is an excellent achievement.

The building is just over one year old. It is in an excellent state of repair. Young people's bedrooms are personalised to suit their tastes and interests. Young people were observed being at ease and relaxed in their environment. Communal areas are warm and friendly, creating a homely feel.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people stated that they feel safe. They did not report any incidents of bullying and feel confident that there is always someone that they can talk to if they are worried or concerned about anything. One young person said, 'I feel very safe here compared to my last place.'</p> <p>On admission to the home, a robust assessment that includes vulnerability is undertaken with all young people. At the time of the inspection, there were no concerns about suicide or self-harm. Those young people who have an indication of self-harm in their histories have this clearly recorded in their risk assessment, and staff are fully aware of measures to be taken to help keep them safe.</p> <p>The home has policies and procedures relating to searching activity. Records are kept of searches carried out of communal areas and bedrooms in line with relevant risk assessments. When searches of young people are needed, due to a safety or security concern, the home has a risk-led approach. The initial search level is a 'pat down', then use of an electronic wand and/or body orifice security scanner (BOSS) chair. The home also has level 4 searches of young people, which involve young people taking off their outer clothing. Any search of this type is always authorised by a senior manager.</p> <p>Young people are very well supported to develop positive social skills and behaviour. A young person stated, 'It has done me some good being here. I am</p>	

more understanding of myself.' Staff make every effort to develop positive relationships with young people and to provide positive role models. An incentive scheme called GOAL (gaining opportunities to achieve and learn) is in place. The scheme is well known and understood by young people. It enables the setting of personalised targets and objectives, through which young people can achieve rewards for good behaviour. They can move through the levels of the scheme, which progress from bronze to champion. Young people who achieve champion level come off the formal incentive system by agreeing a behavioural contract.

There has been a reduction in the use of sanctions, due to the positive use of 'restore and resolve' practices. Sanctions, when used, are appropriate to the misdemeanour and are fully recorded. Records reflect that restorative practice is used well to help young people to understand what they have done wrong, the impact that their behaviour has on others, and that they are supported to take actions to put things right.

Staff have undertaken training in awareness of radicalisation and the government's 'Prevent' duty. The registered manager has a good understanding of the 'Prevent' duty agenda and the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015. A senior manager in the local authority has responsibility for coordinating this area of work and has direct links with the police counter-terrorism team. The registered manager is therefore confident that there is a clear pathway for referring and dealing with any concerns and obtaining any advice required. Although there appear to be clear mechanisms for dealing with any concerns, the home has not yet developed an appropriate policy and procedure.

Physical restraint is used appropriately and in line with regulations. There is a restraint minimisation policy, and staff have up-to-date training in the home's physical intervention methods. Incidents are managed well, recorded fully and monitored closely by managers, using records and closed-circuit television. Young people are able to have their comments about any incident recorded and are able to see a health professional. Learning from incidents are identified in staff debriefings. However, positive practice by staff is often not recorded, and debriefings with young people and staff lack detail that could help to manage behaviour and/or incidents better. For example, debrief forms do not indicate what young people and staff have stated about what they think caused the incident, nor what would have helped. Acquiring this kind of information would help to inform behaviour management plans and risk assessments more effectively, and potentially to improve practices.

Single separation is used appropriately and in line with government guidance. Records are kept of all incidents. Included in records are detailed observations of young people, to show that the criteria for single separation continue to be met until the incident ends, and that young people are being checked in line with their risk assessments to help to keep them safe.

The home has a managing away procedure. This involves managing a young person away from their peers and/or normal routine, due to risks that they pose to themselves or others, or when there is significant damage to property. The procedure is not well understood by staff and some operational managers. This has led to inaccuracy in recording and lack of understanding of what records need to be made. There is no evidence that managing away has been used contrary to regulations. However, staff not fully understanding the home's procedure may lead to inappropriate use. Managers assured at the time of inspection that they will address this immediately. They will ensure that there is very close scrutiny and oversight of all incidents when managing away is used, and that staff understand the policy and what is expected.

There are good arrangements in place for safeguarding young people. There have been eleven incidents of a child protection nature since the last inspection. These have been dealt with appropriately in line with the home's procedures, which staff fully understand. Each incident is referred promptly to the local authority safeguarding team. Records are kept and show the action taken to help to keep young people safe.

There are good links with the local authority designated officer and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The registered manager is a member of the Board's secure group sub-committee. The local authority designated officer commented that managers take appropriate actions, are proactive and have a positive working relationship with the local authority. The LSCB liaises with the home, reporting on its assessment of the home's physical restraint practices.

There have been no incidents of absconding since the last inspection. One young person made an attempt to abscond when at a medical appointment, but was followed closely by staff and returned to the unit. A procedure is in place, and protocol devised by the local authority and local police force, which is up to date and accessible. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities in helping to keep young people safe should an incident occur.

There have been a number of staff recruited since the last inspection. Main records are kept in the human resources department of the local authority. The home keeps a single central record that shows the checks that have been carried out on all prospective employees before they start work in the home. This record was found to contain some gaps when examined. Support staff advised that they have difficulty obtaining the relevant information from the human resources department. The updated information was provided for inspectors when requested on site, though this should have been available to the home at the point when the person started work. Records kept ensure that recruitment checks are robust, so that the right people are employed to work with vulnerable children.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager has significant experience and is qualified. He has been registered with Ofsted for many years. He manages the home very well, supported by a strong leadership team.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, there have been changes in staffing at all levels. The manager stated that this was due in part to the transition to the new building, which brought with it increased expectations and different ways of working. Staff are enthusiastic and described by senior managers as enabling the promotion of fresh and well-considered initiatives to care practice.</p> <p>The registered manager has devised and regularly reviews a 'position statement' that sets out the current strengths of the service and areas for further development. This links to priority developmental targets, challenging all staff to improve in different aspects of service provision to young people. The home's statement of purpose is appropriately detailed, setting out clearly what services are provided, and it is written in an accessible manner.</p> <p>Independent monitoring of the home continues to develop in response to the recommendation made at the previous inspection. Recent reports show improved evaluation of care practices, though these need to demonstrate consistency going forward, to ensure that managers and senior managers can understand better the quality of care provided to young people and areas in which the home can improve.</p> <p>Internal monitoring systems are robust. Internal key performance indicators allow managers to understand matters such as staff performance and the impact of behaviour management practices. Monitoring examines and identifies trends and patterns, so that concerns are responded to swiftly. Six-monthly reports of monitoring provided to Ofsted are appropriately detailed, highlighting strengths of the service and areas for development.</p> <p>Managers and planning and development officers understand well young people's needs and what is required to deliver positive outcomes. Formal reviews of young people's care are completed within expected timescales, and in almost 100% of cases young people attend these meetings, allowing their views to be carefully considered and used in planning for their futures. Regular management reviews of care planning and case files are completed, ensuring that records are complete to help young people's understanding of their care and histories.</p> <p>Staff work well with a range of professionals involved with the care of the young people. Consistently positive feedback from social workers, youth offending staff and independent reviewing officers highlights the positive work undertaken. Staff and managers effectively challenge placing authorities when necessary, especially</p>	

about the development of resettlement and transition plans, to aid effective care.

Complaints' oversight by managers is effective. Records show that both staff and managers respond to concerns swiftly, with records being signed by young people to show that they are satisfied with how the matter has been dealt with.

The home has a clear workforce plan that outlines the way that staffing is organised and developed. Staff are positive about the way that they are supported through regular supervision and appraisals, with a number stating that managers are always available to talk to, to help them understand their roles and improve practice. Newer staff receive more regular formal support and supervision, promoting individual development that benefits young people through practice. Daily handovers and regular team meetings take place, which facilitate effective communication and provide further support for staff. Policies and procedures are available electronically via the home's information technology systems, although all staff are not clear about how and where to find the relevant folder to access information when needed.

Staff induction programmes have developed since the last inspection, including a mixture of theory, practical skills, mandatory training including physical restraint, and experience with the differing residential units. The length and make up of induction has positively changed in response to staff feedback. The level of qualified staff is increasing as more are enrolled onto relevant courses.

Staffing levels are good, with appropriate numbers of sufficiently skilled and experienced staff on duty to meet young people's needs. They receive good training that supports their development and assists them to provide high-quality care to young people. Staff report that they have completed a range of training in areas such as first aid, medication, safeguarding, sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Records of staff training are not up to date and require review. The impact of this matter is limited, as staff spoke highly and in detail of the training that they had received that contributes to the high-quality care provided to young people.

	Judgement grade
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good
<p>The improved initial assessment of young people's education support needs is good and provides detailed information to enable planning and individualisation of learning. Previous attainment and information on young people's support needs, including education health and care plans, inform learning support strategies.</p>	

Speech and language assessments provide good guidance to help teachers to support young people. Support for additional learning needs is put into place swiftly, and young people are integrated quickly into the most appropriate groups based on their needs, ages and abilities.

The number of young people achieving accredited qualifications has improved significantly since the last inspection, and is now good. Most young people achieve their learning goals and make good progress given their starting points, achieving at least one level above their entry level while at the home. Support for young people completing GCSEs is good. Most young people make good progress in developing their English and mathematics skills. However, in mathematics more young people need to be challenged to achieve accredited qualifications at a higher level. Standards of written work are mostly good.

Progress on vocational courses is good, but more young people need to gain accredited qualifications. Young people develop confidence in their work, improving their communication skills and talking skilfully about their learning. Young people demonstrate good development of personal skills, such as taking instructions, working in groups and problem solving. Data to identify progress in personal development is not sufficiently well analysed to demonstrate progress over time. Young people's skills development in hairdressing and beauty and food technology are good. Young people have a good understanding of health and safety and can understand the importance of developing healthy lifestyles.

Achievement is equal across all young people groups. Attendance is good and punctuality has improved. Nevertheless, for a small number of classes young people arrived late.

Teaching, learning and assessment are good. Young people engage with their learning sessions and most make good progress. Lessons are lively, and young people enjoy their learning. Accommodation is excellent with good resources to help to support learning. Teachers plan their sessions well, and most fully meet the needs of young people with different abilities. They manage behaviour well and the number of young people removed from classes is low. The tracking and monitoring of learning by teachers is good and provides a clear view of the progress that young people make. Written work submitted by young people is swiftly marked and returned, with constructive comments from the teacher on how they can progress. Teachers help young people to make progress in developing their English skills, routinely correcting spelling and grammar. Teachers review targets set for young people including personal development, at the end of each learning session. Young people are clear about the progress that they are making.

Improving the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is a key focus of quality improvement measures. Teachers are observed on a regular basis. Areas found for development are a key part of staff training. Teaching staff have good opportunities for continuing professional development.

All young people have access to a broad and balanced curriculum. In addition to core subjects of English, mathematics, science and art, young people have access

to health and well-being courses, music and design technology. Vocational courses are available in hairdressing and beauty therapy, motor vehicle skills, food technology and horticulture. Young people have timetabled physical education sessions with a good focus on developing an understanding of healthy living.

The range of activities is well planned and meets the needs of young people. The management of change is good, with managers and teachers responding to the changes in the profiles of young people at the home and adapting the curriculum to meet individual needs.

Young people engage in an extensive range of leisure and enrichment activities that helps to extend their knowledge and understanding. Enrichment activities include the Duke of Edinburgh's Award, hair and beauty courses and music. Excellent links are in place between the education department and care staff and help to facilitate the enrichment activities.

The development of good external partnership links has provided benefits for young people, such as the bike project operated by Barnardo's, and a partnership with the Dogs Trust, which helps young people to understand the responsibilities of dog ownership. This assists personal development, which continues after young people return to the community. In addition, accredited programmes including food safety and emergency first aid are available.

Leeds City Council provides information, advice and guidance to which young people have access one day per week. Good links are in place for post-16 young people to access learning providers within the community. Transition arrangements are well developed and help to support continued training in the community. At the point of transition, the education department provides detailed information on young people's attainment, to support education and training after their release.

Good use of mobility supports the educational needs of young people well, being effective for college visits, volunteer work and work experience. Mobility enabled a young person to start a college course and to maintain learning for six months until they were ready for resettlement into the community.

Young people have a clear understanding of what is acceptable behaviour in education. The standards of behaviour are generally good. Education staff are skilled at managing poor behaviour, maintaining a positive learning environment. The number of young people excluded from education has significantly reduced with exclusions now being rare. Young people removed from education are managed back into learning swiftly, usually on the same day. There is a good level of mutual respect between teachers and young people, which helps to create a calm, harmonious learning environment.

Young people receive learning sessions on emotional health and well-being, which help to develop an understanding of drugs and substance misuse, sex and relationships, personal safety, emotional well-being, prejudice and discrimination. Young people's understanding is re-enforced at weekly assemblies that regularly promote mutual respect and tolerance of those with different cultures and beliefs.

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, 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 children looked after 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 that 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 whom 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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