

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	23/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC033457
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered Provider	Leeds City Council
Registered Provider address	Leeds City Council 40 George Street Leeds LS1 3DL

Responsible Individual	Stephen Walker
Registered Manager	Francis N'Jie
Inspector	Shaun Common Fiona Millns

Inspection date	23/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>At the last inspection of the home in May 2016, two statutory requirements and nine recommendations were made. Four recommendations relate to the education provision and will be assessed at the next full inspection. Of the two statutory requirements, one has been fully met. 'Managing away' incidents are now fully recorded with all relevant details and are monitored by managers. Staff training records have improved, and the database has been populated with more information. It is not fully complete, therefore it is not possible to ascertain the full range of training that staff have undertaken to support their work with young people. A statutory requirement will be raised in this report about this matter.</p> <p>Three of five recommendations have been fully met. A policy in line with the government's 'Prevent' duty guidance has been developed and implemented. Staff now have full access to all policies and procedures on house units, and recruitment information is kept at the home. An examination of files for staff recruited since the last inspection showed that checks on the reasons why they had left previous employment with children were not all undertaken and recorded in every case.</p> <p>Physical restraint records still do not consistently ensure that debriefings with young people are sufficiently detailed to help to inform behaviour management plans and risk assessments. Managers continue to work with staff to improve this and a recommendation will be made in this report about this matter. External monitoring of the home through reports of visits carried out by an independent person under regulation 44 have improved. Recent reports are more evaluative and offer increased clarity on the strengths and areas for improvement at the home. The reports still remain inconsistent, in some areas. For example, they refer to physical restraint incidents, but do not provide a view as to whether the practice is appropriate. A senior manager at the local authority is working with the independent person to ensure that the quality of these reports improves. A recommendation will be made in this report about this matter. The work that has been done and continues to be undertaken demonstrates the home's commitment to improving the quality of care provided to young people.</p>	

Young people are admitted to the home in a supportive manner that helps them to settle in. Detailed risk assessments are developed quickly and are used effectively to identify needs and develop appropriate plans for young people's care. Plans include vulnerabilities and how staff will support young people. There is good evidence of young people engaging in one-to-one direct work with staff to address the reasons why they came to be placed in a secure children's home. Young people are encouraged to contribute to formal reviews and they are able to access advocacy services. The robust plans support staff to work effectively to help young people to progress and achieve positive outcomes. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of young people's needs. The home's records show that, in recent months, not all planning meetings for young people have been held within the required timescales. Inspectors explored this further and found that this was due to external factors beyond staff's control, for example youth offending team professionals failing to turn up to meetings or not being able to attend. The home raised these matters with the relevant professionals, and meetings were rearranged and held as required.

Transition planning and work carried out by staff with the young people is positive and effective. It ensures that young people are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Transition planning for one young person was not well coordinated by the placing authority. There was no pathway plan available to the home, even though requested, and leaving-care workers had failed to attend the most recent looked after review. The local authority had not fully involved the young person in the transition process. Staff at the home worked with the young person regardless of this, and a positive outcome was achieved because of their determined work that included assisting the young person to visit accommodation in the community. One young person on discharge from the home reported, 'Thank you to all the staff. When I came, I was in quite a bad place and now that I am leaving I am in a much better place. It's sad that I am moving on. All I want to say is, thanks to all the staff that I never said 'bye to. Once again, thank you all.' Inspectors spoke with a young person who is leaving the home. She spoke very highly of all staff and what they have helped her to achieve emotionally, behaviourally and in education, and in helping her to reflect and act upon on changes that she needed to make to move forward positively in her life.

The home has embedded and established working relationships with parents, relevant professionals, agencies and services. Young people's records demonstrate effective working with parents to understand, contribute to and support young people while they are living in the home and on discharge. Close working relationships with partners ensures that young people receive the support and services that they need to progress and achieve. For example, child and adolescent mental health services work with staff and managers to support the emotional well-being of young people effectively. This includes coordination with local authority provision on discharge to ensure ongoing support into the community.

Staff are effective and enthusiastic in their roles. They have a professional and positive approach to working with young people, especially given that they are

regularly faced with some very challenging behaviour and situations. One young person spoke positively about living in the home and commented that, since the last inspection, they felt that things had improved further. The young person was particularly complimentary about the team manager of his unit, and how he was easy to talk to and always very calm.

Young people know how to complain and can access the home's procedure to raise any concerns that they may have. The home's complaints procedure is called 'Can I have a word please'. All concerns are dealt with and responded to quickly, with young people signing the records to say that they are happy with the outcome. Young people are able to escalate any matters to senior managers if they are not happy with the outcome.

There have been 11 child protection concerns since the last inspection. Records show that staff and managers take all concerns seriously and the home's procedures are followed. All matters are managed appropriately to help to keep young people safe.

Physical restraint is used in line with regulations and recorded by staff. Very quickly afterwards, incidents are monitored by managers using closed-circuit television. Formal monitoring ensures that practices are appropriate and identify, on most occasions, any lessons that can be learned to improve practice further. In one incident reviewed by inspectors, there were aspects of practice that could be improved. These were not identified by the managers who undertook the monitoring of this incident, and an opportunity was missed. The records kept by the home show a decrease of approximately 50% in the number of physical restraint incidents from a similar period last year. Managers believe that this is attributable to staff knowing young people's needs very well and being able to engage in early intervention and de-escalation, an increase in the number of physical restraint trainers to provide advice and guidance to staff, and the improved environment, with staff being able to manage young people more effectively within the space available.

The home continues to provide high-quality care and to support young people to make very good progress. Since the last inspection, four young people have achieved a Duke of Edinburgh award. Three have achieved the bronze and one the silver. One female young person is undertaking her silver award and one male young person is undertaking the gold award. These are excellent achievements. The home has recently received a 'Compliment of the Year' award from the local authority for a compliment received from a grandparent. This summarised that her grandson is a completely different person and has been transformed by his time at this home.

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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/04/2016	Full	Outstanding
13/10/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
12/05/2015	Full	Good
16/01/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>Ensure that there is sufficient evidence to demonstrate that staff undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33(4)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, maintain up-to-date training and qualification records for all staff.</p>	31/03/17
<p>Ensure that only individuals are employed to work at the home if full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2. (Regulation 32(2)(3)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, this refers to item 4 of the schedule.</p>	31/12/16

Recommendations

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

- 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 when any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity to amend practice to ensure that it meets the needs of each child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Specifically, ensure that debriefings with young people are more detailed to help to identify causes, triggers or what would have helped, in order to inform behaviour management plans and risk assessments better.

- 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. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Specifically, ensure that reports of visits evaluate the care provided and provide the visitor’s opinion on all aspects inspected.

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled at reviewing incidents. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Specifically, ensure that managers who review incidents of physical restraint are sufficiently skilled and experienced to identify and act upon any areas where practice can be improved further.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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