

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>24/01/2017</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>40 Great George Street Leeds LS1 3DL</b>
<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Steven Walker</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Christopher Graefe</b>
<b>Inspectors</b>	<b>Jennifer Fenlon Janet Black</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>24/01/2017</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:**

- Children and young people enjoy new experiences that are highly positive and rewarding.
- Children and young people gain new skills as they are supported to work towards achievable and measurable goals.
- Children and young people's visits to the home are carefully planned. This helps them to form friendships and participate in shared interests.
- Children and young people receive individualised care that is planned in partnership with parents and professionals.
- Partnership working is highly effective.
- The manager is child-focused and ensures that the needs and rights of the children and young people remain of paramount importance.

## 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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>45: Review of quality of care</p> <p>(2) Regulation 45, (2) In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:</p> <p>(a) the quality of care provided</p> <p>(b) feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care that they receive</p> <p>(5) The system referred to in paragraph 2 must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.</p> <p>(Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b) and (5))</p>	24/03/2017
<p>35: Behaviour management policies and records</p> <p>(3) The registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>(b) 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'):</p> <p>(i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>(c) within five 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.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i) and (c))</p>	03/03/2017

### Recommendations

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

- Make best use of information from independent monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Specifically, ensure that the independent visitor's report is sent to Ofsted before

the end of the month that follows the month in which the visit took place. In addition, raise a query to Ofsted if and when annual surveys have not been received.

- 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. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations; however, in doing so, the home should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

This is with particular reference to repairing any damage within the home and ensuring that one specific en-suite bedroom is cleaned to an acceptable standard. In addition, the manager should review and work in line with the home's health and safety risk assessments, particularly in relation to electrical socket protectors.

- The registered person must challenge (under regulation 5 (c)) any placing authority who asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and relevant plan, as the expectation that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead (in circumstances other than an emergency) is inadequate in relation to their role. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.5)

This is with particular reference to the registered manager ensuring that the care planning regulations are adhered to with regard to the local authority's care plans for individual children and young people.

- The children's guide should help children to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is run by a 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
22/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/01/2016	Full	Good
06/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/11/2014	Full	Outstanding

## 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>Children and young people receive a warm welcome and staff help them to settle, supporting them to really enjoy their stay. One young person said: 'I like that I have my own bedroom and shower.' A parent added: 'I know my son is happy. He tries to take his suitcase to school every day ready for his stay.'</p> <p>Children and young people who attend short breaks receive excellent care that is thoroughly planned by staff who are acutely perceptive and responsive to their complex needs. For some children and young people, this is supported by an 'All about me' document. This provides a personalised account of their needs and preferences. A professional reported that: 'Children and young people experience quality time during their short breaks.'</p> <p>Children and young people are carefully matched, which provides them with the opportunity to make friendships and have fun. They have encountered new experiences: for example, a group of children and young people went caving, which they loved. Another young person enjoys time outside in the garden. These are experiences that are not achievable for all within their home environment.</p> <p>Children and young people gain new skills as they work towards achievable and measurable goals. For example, one young person is working towards washing their hair without the assistance of staff. Another young person can now manage some of their own personal with prompts from staff. This embraces their development and provides them dignity, privacy and respect. One parent wrote the following compliment: 'From the moment X came to your service, he has excelled in many areas of his development and this, I know, is down to you all.'</p> <p>Children and young people are listened to, and staff diligently respond to them through appropriate communication methods. Individual communication needs are clear within their care plans and the implementation of this is evident. Currently an additional 20 staff are undertaking Makaton training to enhance the support to children and young people. To enable communication for the visually impaired, the home has developed 'objects of reference'. This was done in partnership with the school to ensure a consistent approach.</p> <p>Children and young people are actively involved in decisions about the home. For example, they are consulted about meal planning, whereby their favourite foods are incorporated into the menu during a period of their stay. A young person said: 'The food is nice, and I get lots of choice.' The manager has introduced 'grab boxes' containing fruit and vegetables, to provide healthy snacks for children and</p>	

young people. Children and young people have also taken part in a film about what it is like to live in the city where the home is located.

Children and young people are supported to maintain good attendance at school during their short breaks. Staff communicate with the school daily via a 'home/school' book. This ensures that relevant information is shared to promote engagement both at school and the home. On occasion, staff have escorted children to school to enable them to continue in education, until transport complications were resolved.

Children and young people are educated about sexual health and relationships. Staff work in partnership with parents and carers to deliver social stories around topic areas, such as appropriate sexualised behaviour.

Children and young people are supported to develop their independence skills. The manager is developing links to adult service to support smoother and better informed transition for young people. Currently, where possible, young people are supported by staff to visit the new placement and share required information with other professionals to help inform their care plan.

The home is welcoming and affords children and young people a comfortable environment in which they can enjoy their short breaks. The home has developed areas within the home to provide children and young people with a variety of space for activities and relaxation.

The manager has made attempts to add some decorative changes to the bedrooms. He has also developed a game to help children and young people become familiar with the home's complicated layout. However, there are specific areas of the home that are in need of attention and repair to raise the conditions to an acceptable standard.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Children and young people are safe at the home during their short breaks, because they are supervised when they are in the home and community. With these levels of supervision and effective procedures, the risk of them going missing and exposure to exploitation is minimised.</p> <p>Children and young people's stay at the home is assessed and planned effectively, to ensure that they experience safe, enjoyable stays. The admissions process has been developed to support a multi-agency, multiple-setting review of the needs of</p>	



children and young people. This provides a clearer assessment of their need and has introduced tools to be used to support continuity of practice. This helps them to achieve very positive outcomes. A parent reported: 'The planning was thorough; the staff had lots of information about him and can always answer my questions. They are great!'

Children and young people are protected by a staff team that is knowledgeable and able to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns. Individual risks and vulnerabilities are clearly understood by staff, and these are routinely considered when planning stays and activities.

There are times when the staff have needed to use physical intervention to ensure the safety of a child or young person. These measures are not a regular occurrence and are implemented as a last resort. However, the manager must ensure that the recording of these measures is detailed and recorded in line with regulation.

Children and young people are helped to understand the risks connected with social media. Staff understand the risks associated with the internet and have developed strategies to promote safety. A professional reported that: 'Staff respond and raise concerns immediately when online risks are identified.'

Children and young people are also protected by the effective administration of medication. The manager has further developed the medication recording sheet to enable children and young people to sign it. This provides them a sense of control and values their involvement in the process.

The children's guide to the home gives a good range of advice and information to children, young people and their parents. However, this document does not include the address of the Children's Commissioner. This closes off an avenue by which they could gain advice or assistance.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The registered manager is highly qualified and has managed the home since late 2015. He is passionate about getting the best for children and young people and is forward thinking, continually assessing where the team can improve practices for children and young people. A staff member said: 'He is very child-focused. He is very knowledgeable, and we are all working from the same page.'</p> <p>The manager ensures that the needs and rights of the children and young people</p>	

remain of paramount importance. For example, the manager supported a young person to discuss their wishes in respect of their care. The young person was empowered to express his wish for a personalised budget, which enabled him to participate in activities of his choosing.

The manager has a clear understanding about what the home does well and has a strong commitment to improving the quality of care for children and young people. His sound monitoring arrangements ensure that children and young people enjoy a good standard of care. However, although the manager is making use of the information from monitoring activities, the independent visitor's report is not always sent to Ofsted in a timely manner.

The manager has identified deficits in practice and implemented a programme of change to address these. For example, he has developed recording practice around the meaning and use of language, so that the needs and presentation of children and young people are clear.

However, the manager should make use of the internal monitoring systems in place and utilise the findings and the learning from consultation with others within the six-monthly review of the home. The manager could utilise information gained from the annual survey and therefore should raise a query to Ofsted if and when annual surveys have not been received.

The manager utilises the relationships and expertise of other professionals to improve life for young people. Other professionals attend team meetings as guest speakers, enabling staff to review and develop their practice, knowledge and understanding.

Staff and management have good relationships with parents and carers, and there is a strong focus on partnership and communication. The manager has introduced 'free days', which enable staff to support parents and carers with the child or young person at varying times. For example, this has included trips to the dentist, and support for family to attend a wedding. This ensures that staff offer the best support and experiences for children and young people and build upon the relationship with parents and carers.

In addition, staff hold regular coffee mornings for parents and carers that are being used as a forum for sharing information. Families report that they find this really supportive.

Partnership working with the wider system is strong, and professionals appreciate the contribution made by the manager and staff to care planning. However, upon deciding to admit children and young people, the registered manager must satisfy himself that the care planning regulations are adhered to.

## 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 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 that 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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