

SC033502

Registered provider: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to six children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 September 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 27 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- For those young people who are in education, their educational attendance remains low. For others, there have been delays in accessing suitable education placements to promote their learning and provide positive structure in their daily life.

- Not all of the young people respond to the help, advice and guidance from staff, and they persist in risk-taking behaviour, including substance misuse.
- Missing-from-home incidents have reduced, but continue.
- There has been limited success in routinely engaging the young people in positive recreational and social activities, to support positive outcomes and experiences.
- Not all written risk assessments are accurate. Consequently, they do not provide staff with the specific details and information required to meet each young person's identified needs.

The children's home's strengths:

- The young people have built strong and positive relationships with individual staff members.
- The staff team works positively in partnership with a number of professionals and agencies.
- A permanent senior staff team is now in position. The presence of this team enables stronger oversight, and supports further planning, reviewing and monitoring of the care provided to the young people.
- Informal and formal supervision have improved, providing the staff with more consistent support to undertake their care duties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2017	Full	Inadequate
21/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
23/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to 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 person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. (Regulation 8)</p> <p>In particular, that prompt action is taken to identify and provide suitable registered education placements for all young people.</p>	20/10/2017

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

In particular, ensure that the young people's support plans and written risk assessments are up to date and accurately detail all the strategies and relevant information.
- Children should be in full-time education whilst they are of compulsory school age, unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full-time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates that is not in their best interests. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14)

In particular, ensure that all of the young people's attendance in education increases over time.
- Children's home staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. When a child needs additional health or well-being support, staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological or psychiatric support required, and challenge them through regulation 5 engaging with the wider system to ensure that children's needs are met, if this does not happen. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)

In particular, ensure that psychological support is in place to best support the young people's mental health and emotional well-being.

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
In particular, staff should be creative and use a number of means to consult with the young people to gain their views and opinions about their care, and choices of social and recreational activities.
- Children's home staff should seek to identify and provide appropriate opportunities for children to develop themselves in accordance with their wishes and feelings and as part of the home's plan for their care. Each child's talents and interests should be understood and nurtured, with children selecting activities based on their personal preferences and abilities, so far as is reasonable. Staff should also support children to try activities that are 'new' for them, where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.4)
In particular, build further detailed structured activity plans for the evenings, weekends and school holidays to engage routinely the young people.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The experience and progress of the young people are mixed. The young people build strong and positive relationships with staff. As a result, those young people living at the home for a longer period have made some progress, are keeping themselves safer and are adhering to daily life routines and boundaries. However, for those young people who have moved into the home more recently, their behaviour remains unsettled and their engagement with staff is limited. Although the staff promote the importance of education, attendance is low, and there have been delays in organising education placements to support newly admitted young people's learning. This lack of education placements means that positive daily routines have not been established.

The young people are registered with local doctors, dentists and opticians, and access a number of health services. In the main, the young people attend all routine health appointments. The looked after children's nurse said: 'The staff are proactive and contact me, passing on all known information. Getting young people to all health appointments is not easy, but progress has been made.' Some of the young people have an allocated health professional to support their emotional well-being. The young people receive advice and guidance on how to maintain good physical health, and are encouraged to eat a balanced and healthy diet. However, this has not yet had a positive impact for all of the young people, with substance misuse and smoking being prevalent for some. The staff work tirelessly with the young people and other agencies to reduce these unhealthy activities, and thus improve the young people's health.

The young people gain independence skills that support their preparation for adulthood. With the persistence from the staff, they help with house chores including cooking, processing laundry, and cleaning their own rooms.

The young people's views and opinions are gathered through daily discussions, key-work sessions and young people's meetings. However, consultation is limited because most of the young people do not routinely engage in young people's meetings.

The young people have opportunities to access some social and leisure pursuits in the home and the community. However, the planning of these activities and the young people's engagement with them are limited. Instead, the young people routinely spend time away from the home. This often results in the young people taking part in inappropriate activities that hinder their positive progression.

The young people benefit from regular contact with their families. The staff work alongside the young people and their families to maintain or rebuild positive relationships. This promotes a sense of identity, and provides essential support networks for the young people with those who are important to them.

The young people benefit from a home that is spacious, well equipped, tastefully decorated and fully furnished. This provides them with a positive and enjoyable environment in which to live.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The safety of the young people has improved since the last full inspection. Missing-from-home incidents have reduced. The staff demonstrate clearly that they are aware, and understand the risks and vulnerabilities for each young person. However, this behaviour continues for those young people recently admitted to the home. The staff are following missing-from-home protocols, and do go and search for the young people in most instances. An officer overseeing missing-from-home incidents said: 'The staff's sharing of information and intelligence is brilliant. Staff are trying to put things in place. This includes attending meetings with other professionals to minimise and stop further missing-from-home incidents.' This demonstrates that the staff work collaboratively with other agencies, including the police, to try to find the young people, and to carry out preventative work to help young people understand the dangers of going missing. Currently, some of the young people are not responding to all the advice and guidance given. On occasions, this still leaves certain young people vulnerable and at risk to harm.

In the main, the young people's risk assessments and support plans are clear and routinely reviewed, and set out the individual care and support strategies to reduce risk-taking behaviour. However, deficits have been found. Not all of the information accurately reflected the young people's current needs. As a result, staff were not

provided with the correct details to assist them in keeping young people safe.

Some young people are still involved in substance misuse and other risk-taking behaviour. The staff work hard to manage anti-social, risk-taking and seriously challenging behaviour. The staff team is committed to implementing rules and boundaries to enable the young people to be consistently well cared for, and to keep them safer. Work continues to ensure that the young people's well-being and safety improves, and that they are helped to feel secure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has been in post since 2002 and has a wealth of experience in working with children and young people. He holds a social work and management qualification.

The manager demonstrates an understanding of the young people's life experiences, and the progress some have made. There remains a committed and child-centred core staff team. Since the last inspection, the complement of the staff team has been strengthened, with new staff permanently joining the team, and others working on fixed term contracts. This has allowed the staff team to build trusting and more secure relationships with the young people, and has resulted in the staff being able to engage with the young people more positively.

A well-trained staff team receives regular formal supervision that enables it to provide good consistent care to the young people. As a result, the quality of care being delivered has improved.

There is continued collaborative working with a number of professionals, including social workers, drug and alcohol agencies, and the police. A professional said: 'Communication is good. I am kept well informed by staff about X's care.' Staff inform professionals of the progress of the young people, as well as when any serious concerns arise.

The manager has taken action to address the majority of requirements and recommendations set at the last inspection. A review of the home's statement of purpose reveals that it now reflects the current service provided. This includes the admission criteria, details of the care to be provided and the management and staffing structure. Changes have been made to keep the young people safer, and the home is sufficiently staffed. Protocols are adequately followed when the young people go missing from home. The majority of the staff have received training in child sexual exploitation and self-harm.

One recommendation has been partially implemented. The recruitment of an emotional well-being team of health professionals has commenced, and they are to take up their posts imminently.

Monitoring systems evaluate the quality of the service. These include the monthly independent regulation 44 visits and regular audits undertaken by the manager and senior team. The manager ensures that action is taken when problems are detected through the monitoring of the service. However, a number of shortfalls remain that prevent the quality of care provided being consistently good for young people.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. 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.

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: SC033502

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Registered provider address: City Hall, Centenary Square, Bradford, West Yorkshire
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Responsible individual: David Byrom

Registered manager: Christopher Workman

Inspector

Debbie Foster, social care inspector

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