

# 1223201

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this home, which provides care and accommodation for up to four children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home uses a model of intervention known as Multisystemic Therapy – family integrated transitions (MST – Fit). The aim is to help children and young people to return to family-based care through a time-limited programme.

**Inspection dates:** 1 to 2 November 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 26 October 2016

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The children and young people learn how to cope with their feelings and

emotions constructively. This results in improved relationships with their families and others. Many of the children and young people re-engage in their education, and return to live with their families.

- Care is provided by staff who are trained and experienced in the specialist model of care used by the home. This ensures that there is a consistent approach that helps the children and young people to reach their goals.
- The children and young people keep themselves increasingly safe from risks, such as substance misuse and going missing, as they develop insight into their own behaviour and learn how to make safer choices.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Not all admissions have been made in line with the home's statement of purpose. This has resulted in children being admitted without an understanding of the programme, and one child leaving early. Managers have failed to act on known risks when admitting children or young people, to prevent them from having a negative impact on other residents.
- There is insufficient focus on the actions needed to improve care practice, and to develop the staff's knowledge during supervision sessions..
- Despite having systems in place to gather the views of children and young people, this information gathering is not being undertaken sufficiently often to provide the manager with feedback about the quality of the care practice in the home.
- Some staff do not have all the information they need to inform their care practice because of a lack of access to electronic systems.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/10/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/06/2016	Full	Outstanding

## 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, The 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that–</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 13 (2)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, to ensure that children and young people are admitted in line with the process described in the statement of purpose.</p>	30/11/2017

### Recommendations

- 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. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from a suitably qualified experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- Some records may be kept electronically provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced

in legible form. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

## **Inspection judgements**

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The children and young people take part in a specific programme alongside their family members or carers, with the aim of returning to their care. A well-trained and committed staff team delivers this model of care capably. As a result, children and young people successfully return to live with family members in a large number of cases.

With the use of Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), the children and young people are learning to negotiate relationships and regulate their emotions more effectively. The staff coach them to unpick their behaviour and develop new ways of resolving challenges. One young person who has successfully completed the programme said: 'The skills I have learnt help me to stay calm; I will definitely use them at home.'

Working alongside the children and young people is at the forefront of care practice. The children and young people are fully involved in identifying their goals at the commencement of the programme. Regular reviews of progress help them to understand what they need to do. This sense of control helps the children and young people to restore order to their lives. One young person who was regularly engaging in self-harming behaviour has returned home without further harm. Another, who refused to undertake personal hygiene tasks or attend school, now showers daily and has returned to school.

Engagement of the children and young people in education is a key priority for the staff. Several children and young people have come to live at the home with minimal school attendance, and left with full-time attendance. Staff take action when children and young people do not have adequate suitable educational provision, working in partnership with the virtual school.

Although the goal is for the children and young people to return to live with family, staff recognise when it becomes apparent that this is not in their best interests. Some of the children and young people also decide that they do not wish to return home following the programme, and staff advocate on their behalf, sensitively supporting them to move to other long-term placements.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

The children and young people focus on behaviours that put them at risk, such as running away, as part of their individual programme. Through gaining insight into their own thoughts and feelings, they are able to make better choices. This prevents the children and young people from engaging in risk-taking behaviour. On arrival at the home, one young person was absconding frequently. At the point that she completed the programme she returned home, where she has sustained a part-time job and taken up a place at college. Another has been able to increase his unsupervised time in the community through checking in with staff

on his phone regularly.

The children and young people respond well to the behaviour management system. This enables them to earn 'dollars' to convert into rewards. The staff adeptly defuse any situations of conflict that may arise. Clear behaviour management plans support the staff's practice in this area. This has kept the need for physical intervention to a minimum. However, recently, the needs of two children resulted in an increase in the use of restraint and physical intervention.

The children and young people receive a well-coordinated response from the staff team if they go missing from the home. There are clear individual plans in place, and partnerships with the police are effective. Independent return home interviews are offered in all cases.

Risk assessments identify the vulnerabilities of the children and young people, and measures are put in place to minimise risks. This is effective in protecting the children and young people for most of the time. However, an incident has recently occurred because these measures to reduce risks were insufficient. The incident required a child to be restrained several times, and ultimately to be removed by the police.

The physical environment is comfortable and well maintained. Damage is swiftly repaired. A wide range of thorough risk assessments keep the children, young people and staff safe.

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

The registered manager is appropriately qualified and leads a well-qualified and motivated staff team. The staff undertake a wide range of training, including in-depth training around the home's model of care. Their enthusiasm and knowledge of this model is evident in their interaction with the children and young people, and the direct work they undertake with them.

The home's leaders foster a sense of shared ownership and accountability among the whole team, which collaborates to provide consistent expectations of the children and young people. The children and young people respond well to this clarity, which is evident in the progress they make in re-engaging with education and meeting their target goals.

The home's statement of purpose describes a robust admission process, including thorough impact risk assessments prior to admission. However, two children have been admitted without all the elements of this process being in place. As a result, one child has left early, as he was not able to engage in the therapeutic process, and another was admitted without the usual preparation work being undertaken with both himself and his family. This is contrary to the statement of purpose. Although the risk around the relationship between these two children was known, the manager failed to act adequately on this knowledge. The conflict between them quickly escalated, culminating in an incident that required the use of physical restraint and police intervention. The staff have been able to mitigate the impact of these admissions on the other young person who is resident in the home, due to him being at the end of the programme and feeling secure.

Supervision sessions do not support and challenge staff, including those who are still in their probationary period, sufficiently in order to promote improved practice and development. A lack of identified actions for staff inhibits their ability to provide continuous improvement of the experiences for the children and young people.

Case records reflect the progress of the children and young people within the programme, but not all care planning documentation is accessible to all staff. This is due to lack of access to certain electronic recording systems for some staff. This could impact on the ability of the staff to offer the most effective care.

Although systems are in place to gather the views of the children and young people about their care at the home, they are seldom collected. This limits the ability of leaders to learn from their feedback.

Valuable relationships between managers, families and other professionals serve to stabilise the lives of the children and young people when they enter the programme. Examples include re-integrating children and young people back into their schools, and agreeing boundaries in partnership with parents.

## **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 and 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:** 1223201

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Leeds City Council

**Registered provider address:** 40 Great George Street, Leeds LS1 3DL

**Responsible individual:** Post vacant

**Registered manager:** Martin Scarth

## Inspector

Janet Black, social care inspector

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