

SC033502

Registered provider: Bradford Children's Specialist Service

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and runs this home. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people aged between 12 and 18 years old. These children and young people have a range of social, emotional and behavioural needs. The home is currently being managed by an acting manager.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 July 2018

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: 6 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/09/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/06/2017	Full	Inadequate
21/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good

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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(a))</p> <p>This is with particular reference to completing a thorough pre-admission impact risk assessment for all young people referred, including a placement matching assessment to those already living at the home. The registered manager should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children.</p>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)) In particular, to keep an up-to-date record of staff supervisions and to complete employees' appraisals as planned.</p>	31/10/2018
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the</p>	15/08/2018

<p>registered person considers to be serious.</p> <p>A notification made under this regulation must include details of—</p> <p>the matter;</p> <p>the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter.</p> <p>(Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e) and (5)(a))</p>	
<p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>(Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))</p>	15/08/2018
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>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>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>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)(b) and (5))</p>	31/10/2018

Recommendations

- Just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (regulation 21(c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10) In particular, to make sure that children and young people have access to

the lounge which should not be kept locked.

- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulations 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1) In particular, to make the location risk assessment more localised and to include the areas of risk to children and young people in the community.

Inspection judgements

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

There has been a period of change in this home. Some of the children and young people have experienced unplanned moves and there are new residents who have recently moved in.

Some children and young people have been placed during a difficult time when the behaviours of the existing residents have deteriorated. This has included damage to the home, aggression towards each other and against staff. This has led to the new residents' exposure to negative behaviours, and instability from the onset of their placement. As a result, children and young people experience a chaotic home environment and require close supervision by staff to keep them safe from each other.

Children and young people have mixed outcomes. Some have made little progress since their admission, and the staff at times struggle to engage them in any activities. Some children and young people prefer to spend time away from the home with peers, while others have settled quickly and are making good progress. It is clear that the staff team's caring approach and perseverance has led to the children and young people forming positive relationships with adults. This is particularly important for those children and young people who struggle to develop attachments. Those who have previously lived at the home often return for ongoing emotional support from the staff.

Education outcomes are mixed. Young people have attended college interviews and have placements ready for the new term. However, for others attendance and engagement has been poor, despite the staff's continued efforts to provide support and encouragement. One professional said, 'Staff persisted in getting (name of young person) to re-engage. They tried desperately to get him in to school.' To prevent distractions and to encourage children's and young people's engagement with education, staff have occasionally locked the lounge door. This restricts the access to all children and young people because of the actions of some.

The requirement from the last inspection has been met, in that the effective challenge by the manager to a child's school has resulted in them receiving home tuition until a more suitable educational provision is found.

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

Pre-admission planning documents lack detail. The absence of this information has led to inappropriate matching. Children and young people are not safeguarded effectively from each other and there has been an escalation in their risk-taking behaviours. This has included an increase in substance misuse, offending behaviour and children and young people going missing together.

The number of missing and absent episodes has been consistently high over this period, putting children and young people at an increased risk of offending behaviour and exploitation. Staff now follow the children's and young people's individualised missing person risk assessments to locate and safeguard them. The introduction of a dedicated police officer has led to significantly improved information-sharing. For one young person, this has resulted in significant progress and a reduction in their missing episodes. The staff team works well with partners and other safeguarding professionals. This ensures that they are better able to track and manage risks associated with individual children and young people.

The manager has reviewed the home's location risk assessment, but this does not identify known areas of risk for children and young people, such as the taxi rank.

The high number of restraints relate to an escalation in children's and young people's challenging behaviours. Staff have requested police intervention on many occasions when they have been unable to de-escalate the situation. The regulator has not always been informed of these events. This does not enable independent scrutiny of these incidents, nor does it help the provider to identify trends and patterns in children's and young people's behaviour.

The manager has introduced a new approach to behaviour management. She has stopped issuing children and young people with sanctions and financial incentives for everyday tasks, such as going to bed on time. The staff are beginning to use a restorative practice approach to reward and promote positive behaviours. This is helping children and young people to reflect on the impact of their actions and learn how to make reparation. This approach is still in its infancy and will require some time to embed into practice and to achieve consistency for children and young people.

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

Since the last inspection, the registered manager has been absent from the home for a significant amount of time. This period of absence and the diminished management arrangements coincided with the provider restructuring the staff team. This involved

the deputy manager acting up as the manager, which she continues to do, as the registered manager has taken up a temporary six-month post elsewhere. The acting manager will now put herself forward to be registered for this time and will make an application to the regulator.

In response to the management changes, an experienced senior member of staff is acting up in the deputy position. Along with the acting manager, they share the same vision for the home. They are now managing a new team following a review of the staffing across the local authority. The acting manager's focus, alongside that of the children and young people, is on developing the staff team and ensuring that there is effective challenge of poor embedded practice.

Staff receive ongoing in-house and external training. This includes developing skills in a recognised therapeutic approach to make sure that the staff adopt the home's model of care. The supervision matrix is not up to date and does not identify whether staff receive regular supervision, in line with the provider's policy. Staff have not had an annual appraisal. The acting manager is attempting to address this and plans to progress appraisals now that she is formally in charge of the home.

The management team has introduced new recording systems and processes to encourage consistent staff practice. As staff were not routinely undertaking daily tasks, such as health and safety checks around the home, the introduction of a shift team leader and a new daily handover sheet has improved practice.

An independent person routinely visits the home and notes areas for improvement, but her reports do not meet regulation in that they do not offer an opinion about whether children and young people are safeguarded and whether staff promote their welfare. The acting manager demonstrates a clear understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and she is clear about the areas that need improving. She has produced an evaluative six-monthly review, which sets targets for the future development of the home, but this report currently lacks feedback from stakeholders.

Regular meetings involving health, education and social care professionals provide a forum to agree multi-agency care plans. Children and young people receive consistent messages from all professionals involved in their care because of the partnership working promoted by the home.

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: SC033502

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Bradford Metropolitan District Council

Registered provider address: Sir Henry Mitchell House, 4 Manchester Road,
Bradford, Yorkshire BD5 0QL

Responsible individual: David Byrom

Registered manager: Christopher Workman

Inspector

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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