

SC406505

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 12 children who have learning disabilities, which may also include physical disabilities and/or sensory impairment. Children stay at the home for short breaks on a shared care basis.

The experienced registered manager has been in post since January 2016.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 June 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 7 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
18/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
19/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
20/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children enjoy their visits to the home, and they are very well supported by staff who know them exceptionally well. The staff are nurturing and totally committed to ensuring that children are relaxed, settled and have fun during their stay.

The staff team has expertise in supporting disabled children. They know each child well and are extremely intuitive and attuned to their needs. They strive to understand children's views and ensure that children are consulted from when they arrive at the home. Staff make good use of a range of aids to assist communication that are child friendly. For example, chalkboards are used to help children pick what they would like to eat or what activities they would like to do. This results in the children feeling empowered and able to express their views.

Children enjoy lots of positive activities during their stays. The home environment is child centred, and as a result, the children are able to enjoy activities like arts and crafts, trampolining, listening to music and messy play in the newly created mud kitchen in the garden. All of these activities enable the children to develop positive peer relationships and experience opportunities they may not be able to access with their families.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the staff provided flexible support to the children and their families. This support ensured that children and families were not isolated throughout the pandemic. The staff worked effectively with schools, professionals and families to ensure that the holistic care needs of the children were still being met.

Children's all-round independence skills have increased. The focus is placed on helping children to progress through promoting a variety of experiences that

enhance their social, emotional and physical development. Children's confidence and resilience grow as a result of these experiences.

All children have agreed targets for independence which are reviewed regularly. When children achieve their targets, their successes are celebrated and rewarded. This means that the children are motivated to try new experiences.

The children have their own children's council which enables them to have a say in how the home is run. They contribute to the home's seasonal newsletter and suggest ways of making a positive contribution within the local community. Children have also been involved in the recruitment of new staff to the home. This clearly demonstrates that children's views and opinions are valued and actively sought.

Staff are very knowledgeable about the complex health needs of the children. Staff support children to have their health needs met effectively by working in partnership with specialist health professionals and families, and by developing their own knowledge base through practice and research. This increased knowledge helps to ensure that children receive the support that they need to remain fit and healthy.

Professionals told the inspector that the service is 'amazing' and that it provides 'highly individualised care for children and families'. Other comments include that the service is 'flexible' and 'resourceful'. This helps to ensure that children and their families can access support when they need it.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

The home has had no safeguarding incidents since the last inspection and has continued to improve systems to fully safeguard the children during their stay. These systems include checks with health professionals, social workers, families and schools. As a result of these improved systems, the children's needs are well understood prior to their stays.

Staff manage transitions extremely well. The staff visit children in all their environments before they are admitted to the home. Staff start to build trusting relationships with the children and their families, schools and other professionals at the very earliest opportunity. This enables the staff to have robust risk assessments already in place prior to a child's first stay. These risk assessments are reviewed prior to each stay to help better protect the children.

The compatibility of children during their stay is considered very carefully. This enables the staff to support children to have stays alongside peers that they know well. This helps to ensure that children are surrounded by familiar people and a consistent staff team during their stays.

The staff are very experienced, motivated and child focused. They are extremely resilient and, together with the manager, they work to find resources to help keep children protected during their stays. Risk assessments are continually improved and

very clear and have effective management oversight. This means that staff can respond promptly and effectively when the children are in crisis.

The staff complete vocational qualifications and access specialist and bespoke training in addition to mandatory training, which supports them in their roles and enables the staff to support the children to begin to manage their emotional and behavioural needs.

Physical intervention is only used when all other interventions have been exhausted and the welfare of the children and staff are at risk. The staff use their individual knowledge, experience and understanding of the triggers of the children's behaviours to enable them to work restoratively with the children. This helps children to return to base line and re-engage with the positive ethos within the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager of the home is inspirational and aspirational for the service, children, their families and his staff. He exhibits excellent leadership qualities for his staff team. He encourages his staff to be inventive and creative in their practice. This helps to improve the quality of the children's stays at the home.

The manager provides the staff with bespoke training and personal development opportunities. He also uses monthly supervision and team meetings as areas to improve the knowledge and experience of the staff. This means that staff have effective development plans which ensures children receive individualised care and attention.

The manager has excellent oversight of the home. He ensures that care plans are updated systematically by his senior residential practitioners. He uses the whole staff team to help ensure that care plans are robust and reflect the changing care needs of each individual child. All the children have clear development targets in their care plans, and these are supported by effective direct work with the children. This means that the children are able to enjoy positive experiences and flourish in every aspect of their lives.

The manager ensures that his staff work effectively in partnership with all agencies. He provides opportunities for staff to experience other settings to enrich their experience and understanding of other professional roles. This creative way of developing staff enriches the quality of care afforded to the children.

The manager actively challenges senior managers and other professionals when there are resource shortfalls or clear needs to help safeguard the children in his care. This approach has enabled children who have high level and complex needs to continue to access the service.

Professionals said that the manager and the staff team are the experts in their field. They share good practice with other agencies in order to help raise the standards of

care and support provided to the children and their families.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC406505

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Leeds City Council, Civic Hall, Calverley Street, Leeds LS1 1UR

Responsible individual: Joel Hanna

Registered manager: Christopher Graefe

Inspector

Noel Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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