

# SC033457

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this secure children's home

This secure children's home is owned and managed by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict children's liberty.

The home can accommodate up to 24 children aged between nine and 17 years. It provides care for up to 14 children placed by the Youth Custody Service and 10 children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities.

Admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007.

There were 19 children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

**Inspection date:** 21 February 2023

**Date of last inspection:** 27 September 2022

**Judgement at last inspection:** requires improvement to be good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children

- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

## Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

### The care of children

Since the last inspection, a number of children have left the home and new children have moved in. Careful and sensitive planning takes place to ensure that children understand what is happening and what to expect when they first arrive. Most children experience positive and well-planned endings as staff help to prepare and support children for their onward journey.

During this inspection, children were seen to be upbeat and positive, and there was a warm and relaxed atmosphere across the home. Children said that they felt listened to and that their views are considered and acted on. This helps children to feel safe, and to build good relationships with staff.

Children's needs are clearly prioritised, and staff are responsive to those needs. There is a good understanding across the service of the complexities of children's behaviour. The multi-agency integrated approach to the care of children is firmly embedded in day-to-day practice. Care staff are becoming more confident and attuned in their delivery of consistent and child-focused practice.

Regular multi-disciplinary meetings, involving staff from all grades, take place regarding the children. This ensures that care planning is kept up to date and that children's progress is closely monitored and kept under review.

Children told inspectors that they are 'okay and enjoy good times' living in the home. Professional feedback from other agencies is positive, with the independent advocate stating that children 'always appear content and happy'. Staff work hard to break down barriers and to help the children to begin to trust and confide in them. These developing relationships give children the stability and security that they need to start to reflect on their backgrounds and individual circumstances, and to move forward with their lives.

### The safety of children

Children's risks, vulnerabilities and behaviours are well known at every level across the service. This informs decisions around admission planning and allows managers to consider the impact that new admissions may have on children already living in the home. Risk management is regularly reviewed and updated, and this helps to keep children safe.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have reflected on and re-evaluated restraint practice. This has resulted in improvements across the service. Increased

management oversight and scrutiny is helping staff to better understand and embed safer restraint practice principles and to improve their recordings of these incidents. Lessons are still being learned and practice is improving, alongside developing staff confidence and resilience in their approach to managing the complexities of children's behaviour.

Management oversight and monitoring of serious incidents have improved. Senior leaders have amended serious incident procedures and ensure that staff are aware of their responsibilities in these situations. The quality and timeliness of information-sharing with Ofsted in accordance with regulations have improved. This enables the regulator to assess actions taken in response to safeguarding concerns.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers**

Leaders and managers continue to have ambition and drive to improve the service. They have considered and acted on the shortfalls identified in the last inspection. Managers are applying more vigorous quality assurance processes to improve the overall quality of care for children. Shortfalls are identified early and addressed quickly, and there is a shared understanding across the service to improve practice.

Leaders and managers are focusing on developing staff and investing in them. Additional training opportunities and the introduction of clinical supervision is giving staff the confidence to work with younger children and children with more complex needs. This helps children to build positive relationships with staff.

The quality and frequency of practice-based supervision is more consistent and reflective. This supports staff's practice and personal development. Senior management oversight and the dip-sampling of supervision session records ensure that improvements to this area of practice continue. Staff said that they value the positive changes across the service.

Although staffing levels have improved overall, there continue to be some occasions when children are locked in their bedrooms outside of their usual daily routine and against the principles of single separation. While these occasions are becoming less frequent as staffing levels increase, managers do not consistently consult with children about this, or explain the rationale for why this measure may be necessary to maintain their safety.

The manager has not sent the quality of care review to Ofsted. This does not enable the regulator to have oversight of the service or ensure that actions identified in the report have been addressed.

The recommendations from the previous inspection relating to education have not been reviewed at this visit and will be considered as part of the next full inspection.

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
27/09/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
06/10/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/05/2021	Full	Outstanding
07/01/2020	Full	Good

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

- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. In particular, school leaders should provide training so that all teachers know how to plan and teach a rich curriculum, and use assessments well, to support children's learning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. In particular, school leaders should ensure that teachers and classroom-based assistants are clear about their roles. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- The registered person should ensure that children in secure children's homes are only placed in single separation when necessary to prevent injury to any person (including, for example, the child who is being restrained), or to prevent serious damage to the property of any person (including the child who is being restrained). A record should be made and kept of all uses of single separation in secure children's homes (regulation 17 of The Children (Secure Accommodation) Regulations 1991). Children should be offered the opportunity to read and add a comment to the record of their separation. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.65)
- The registered person should undertake a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home. The processes in place to enable such a review should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. The generated report should be sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority of all children in the home who are looked-after children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

## Secure children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC033457

**Provision sub-type:** Secure Unit

**Registered provider:** Leeds City Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Benjamin Finley

**Registered manager:** Francis N'Jie

## Inspectors

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector (lead)

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector

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