

1223201

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated and managed by a local authority.

It provides care for up to four children who experience social and emotional difficulties. The home uses a therapeutic model of care to support children.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager is experienced and registered with Ofsted in July 2023.

Inspection dates: 8 and 9 November 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2023	Full	Good
18/08/2021	Full	Outstanding
03/04/2019	Full	Good
14/08/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit greatly from the strong emphasis and importance given to building positive relationships with staff. Over time, children begin to trust the staff and respond well to the consistent advice, guidance and care provided. Staff use a therapeutic model of care and provide a highly nurturing approach. This helps the children to feel cared for and safe so that they can make progress.

Children have made progress in many areas of their lives. They have improved their relationships with their family members and built attachments and relationships with the staff. The children have improved their social skills, and they can better manage their emotions. They have also developed their independent living skills and started attending school.

Children benefit from structured routines. They know when they are attending school, have appointments, visiting family and friends, or have planned leisure activities. These consistent routines provide the children with a sense of certainty. This helps the children to feel more secure.

Children regularly see their family members and others who are important to them. Staff ensure that the children rebuild and maintain these essential relationships. Staff support all children's visits to see their family members, including those who live some distance away. Staff recognise how crucial these family connections are and the important role they play in the children having a clear view of their own identity.

Children take pleasure in spending time with friends and family and going shopping, bowling and to the cinema. This summer, children have enjoyed new experiences that have included going on trips to theme parks, to London, outdoor pursuits and going on holiday. This helps the children to broaden their life experiences of the world around them.

The children are encouraged and supported to take part in learning how to look after themselves. They routinely help to clean and tidy their bedrooms and participate in cooking and doing their laundry. This helps the children to develop necessary independent life skills appropriate to their age.

The children's wishes, feelings and views are valued by staff. Their opinions are taken on board and include matters that affect their everyday lives. This influences the care that the children receive. They have daily discussions with staff, and they take part in regular meetings. This results in children having a real say about things that matter to them. This includes the activities they wish to do, the decoration of their home, seeing their family and plans for their future.

Children live in a positive environment. The house is well furnished and decorated throughout. Rooms are personalised, including the lounge and children's bedrooms. There have been some incidents where damage to the decor and furnishings has occurred. Repairs are undertaken promptly, which helps to ensure that the home is a positive place to live.

Each child is attending school, college or an alternative provision. Staff understand the importance of education and continue to support the children to increase their attendance. This is having a positive impact for some children. However, for a child who has a reduced timetable, there is no structured plan to increase the lesson time and subjects studied. This falls short of ensuring that there is a coordinated approach to make sure all children attend full-time education to better support their continued learning.

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

Keeping children safe is a crucial focus for staff. The staff are trained to use the provider's chosen therapeutic model of care. They receive training that supports them to safeguard children so they know how to manage the children's behaviour and act when children go missing from the home. The staff use the strong and trusting relationships that they have built with children, along with a therapeutic approach. This ensures that the staff are equipped with the right approach, skills and knowledge and take the necessary action to keep children safe.

Children benefit from the restorative approach that the staff use. This assists the children enormously when they become upset and struggle to manage their emotions. There is a focus on reinforcing the achievements of children. Children respond well to receiving lots of praise and incentives for positive behaviour. After a period where a number of serious incidents occurred, the use of this consistent approach by the staff has started to have a positive impact, with children becoming more settled.

Staff know the children well and fully understand each child's vulnerabilities and associated risks. Staff follow the agreed strategies that help to protect the children from harm. There are clear, written risk assessments, care plans and other safety plans that are reviewed routinely. The staff can easily identify the matters that individual children find upsetting. Subsequently, they are able to quickly respond. This assists children to feel supported and safe.

When escalating incidents occur that include the children missing from the home, the staff support the children to recognise the impact of such behaviour. Children take part in coaching and other direct-work sessions with staff. This enables the children to better understand the dangers and consequences of their actions. The manager and staff work well with all agencies. This team-around-the-child approach has helped to identify alternative interventions and preventative measures to better support the children. As a result, these incidents have declined in frequency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager and the senior team provide the staff with strong and clear leadership. The manager and deputy lead by example, role modelling the therapeutic model of care that is disseminated throughout the staff team. Children benefit greatly from this consistent care approach.

The manager gives direction and support and has established high expectations of the staff. This enables the staff to provide good-quality care to the children. In turn, staff make sure that they put the children at the heart of all that they do.

Effective communication systems exist. These include daily handovers, weekly staff meetings and therapeutic meetings. This makes certain that the care of the children is organised and that the staff clearly know what they are doing.

Staff speak passionately about their work with the children. They demonstrate their commitment to providing the best care. Staff say that they work well as a team and are very well supported by managers. This is reinforced with routine formal supervision sessions that include discussions about the staff's well-being and their individual development. This enables the staff to conduct their roles and duties and care for the children well.

The staff collaborate well with professionals. Social workers and other professionals confirm this strong partnership working. Staff recognise the importance of sharing information. As a result, children benefit from consistent care and support approaches from all the adults involved in their lives.

The provider ensures that the staff routinely attend their essential mandatory training. This includes first aid, safeguarding and behaviour management. In addition, the staff receive more specialist training in such areas as child sexual exploitation, county lines and cannabis awareness. This provides the staff with the knowledge and skills to care for and keep the children safe.

Thorough internal and external monitoring systems exist. When deficits are detected, they are quickly addressed. The requirements and most of the recommendations made at the last inspection have been implemented. This helps to maintain the good-quality care that the children receive. However, one recommendation has been carried forward. This relates to ensuring that the language and terminology in the children's records is constantly child-friendly.

The home's statement of purpose plainly sets out the ethos of the home and how it will care for the children. The home does admit children in emergency situations, and in recent months, several children have moved in and out of the home. In addition, there have been some staff changes. Careful thought and consideration have been given to the competing needs of the children who live in the home and those moving in. However, the manager has not anticipated and considered the

impact on children, given the number of changes that have occurred in a short space of time.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the information about the children is helpful, and that child-friendly language is used. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 14.4, page 62)
- The registered person should consider the impact of change on children when changes are in close succession, including admissions, discharges and staffing alterations. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 3.6 page 15)
- The registered persons should make sure that children who are not in full-time education have a detailed plan to increase their education timetables and include key subject learning. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 5.2 page 26)

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: 1223201

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Leeds City Council

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

Responsible individual: Benjamin Finley

Registered manager: Debbie Reynolds

Inspector

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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