

SC406505

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 the home. The home is registered to provide care for up to 12 children with learning disabilities, which may also include physical disabilities and/or a sensory impairment.

Children stay at the home for short breaks or on a shared-care basis.

Three children were having an overnight stay during the inspection.

A manager has been in post since February 2024 and has submitted their application to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 5 and 6 March 2024

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: 15 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
21/06/2021	Full	Outstanding
07/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
18/12/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children flourish because they are provided with nurturing care from a dedicated staff team. There are currently 46 children accessing this home, all of who the staff know well. The children are helped to build supportive and trusted relationships with the staff quickly. This is because the staff adapt their approach and communication styles to meet the needs of each individual child. Furthermore, the children are welcomed at each visit, with home comforts, such as familiar bedding, clothes, toys and their photo on their bedroom door.

The home is extremely child-friendly, and child-focused. The home is kept spotlessly clean by the housekeeper. There are lots of toys, books, sensory items and mirrors around the home. There are several wonderful areas for the children to play together or with staff. There are ball pools, trampolines, play tents and racetracks around the home. The staff work hard to set up creative activities for the children to experience a range of new things. The home is colourful with mural's painted on the walls. At the time of the inspection there was an Easter bunny hunt set up around the home for the children to enjoy and take part in.

The staff in this home understand the importance of keeping children and their families together. The outreach support that the staff team provide to the children and their families is exceptional. Staff go above and beyond in their roles of to ensure that the children are offered targeted support where they need it the most. One professional said, 'The emergency care they [the staff] provided for [name of child] and their parent was fantastic.' The staff spend time in the children's family homes, providing help, guidance and reassurance to parents and their children.

The staff understand the importance of supporting all families and staff do all they can to ensure that the parents benefit from a wealth of support. This includes coffee mornings that staff arrange on a regularly basis. These mornings help bring the parents together, and widens the parents' support network and helps them to feel that they are not alone. This in turn benefits the children, as parents share helpful contacts and information on services. The staff invite external visitors to attend these sessions to present information on specialist topics that are relevant to the needs of the children.

Children are the heart of everything that happens in this home. This support starts well before the child visits the home. The holistic planning between parents, carers and all professionals is remarkable. For one child, their education worker completed social stories with them to help them to understand where they would be visiting. When a child visits the home, the staff make regular checks with the child's parents to ensure that the child was okay after each visit. If plans need to change then this is acted on. Excellent planning ensures that the children's needs

can be met. This approach helps to give the children the best possible chance of settling into this home.

Communication with children prevails throughout this home. There are terms of reference outside of each room. For example, toy toilets outside the bathrooms and toy quilt covers outside their bedrooms. The staff are trained in different communication methods and can be seen communicating with children in different ways, in line with the children's preferences. Children are helped to communicate and have their wishes and feelings heard. The children have voted and elected a children's councillor who represents the children in the home, giving them another arena to share their views.

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

Strong planning and excellent communication between the children and all the adults in their lives means that incidents are minimal. Since the last inspection there have been three recorded incidents that have required the use of physical intervention. The staff know the children well and they know what works for them and what does not. They are extremely successful in de-escalating incidents and helping the children to regulate their emotions. This has helped to create a home-from-home environment for the children where they feel calm and relaxed.

The children's risk assessments are clear and concise. These documents are supported by individual crisis support plans. These plans are regularly reviewed with parents and key workers to ensure they are kept up to date and amended when required. The staff recognise that one plan does not fit all children so the children's plans are individualised. More importantly, the staff know the risks and vulnerabilities for each child. They know their triggers and their coping skills. This is helping to keep the children as safe as possible.

The support from the manager and staff is excellent and this support increases the children's life experiences. Parents and professionals speak highly of the staff and the care that is provided to their children. Parents feel reassured that their child feels happy when visiting the home. One parent said,

'It was a big thing for us to allow our child to stay there. They [the staff] gave us much needed reassurance. Nothing is too much for them.'

The children's health needs are given the upmost priority. The staff meticulously organise and plan for each child's stay in advance. The staff ensure that they have the most up-to-date information on the child's current medication, which they are appropriately trained to administer. The staff follow the 'ring around' process to ensure that each child's parent or carer are spoken to. Children's health plans are kept up to date with their photo and important information is recorded. These processes significantly reduce the risk of any errors occurring.

Exceptional attention to detail, planning and care is given to those children with allergies and intolerances. This ensures that their well-being, health and safety are maintained. The home's chef knows the needs of the children, and she ensures that mealtimes are safe for the children. Table mats that are colour coded and highlight any needs, likes and dislikes for the children are used to ensure that the children enjoy mealtimes in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The quality of leadership and management is such that, despite a change of manager, the home continues to thrive. This is because the previous manager has remained involved in the running of the home, and the new manager has been provided with a thorough handover. The staff speak extremely positively about this smooth transition, which has benefited the children, who continue to receive an exceptional standard of care.

The manager has very high aspirations for the children. She has clear expectations that the staff provide only the absolute best care for the children. The staff have real ambition to make a positive difference in every child's life. This is driven by the manager who leads by example. One member of staff said, 'She [name of manager] is approachable, fair and extremely child-focused.'

The manager's monitoring and reviewing tools are extremely effective. Shortfalls are identified and quickly acted on. The management monitoring includes a review of the children's records, medication logs, staff supervision sessions and regular checks on all areas of the home. The manager has full oversight of this home and knows what is happening for the children and the staff. The manager also undertakes observations of staff practice. Visiting the home on a weekend to gain an understanding of the children's experiences. This is a supportive process to help continually increase staff knowledge and skills. This is always with a clear focus on better outcomes for the children.

The partnership working in this home is excellent and worthy of disseminating to others. The joined up working between the manager, the staff, the children, their families, education and local authorities is exceptional. When something is not right for the children the manager advocates on their behalf, and ensures that their needs are met. The manager 'thinks outside of the box' to ensure that the service is flexible in meeting the ever-changing needs of the different children who access this home.

The manager absolutely understands her role in safeguarding all the children, and she challenges the local authority when they do not follow their safeguarding procedures. The manager acts on any allegations that the children make, and she informs all of the relevant safeguarding agencies, including Ofsted. The manager completes fact-finding investigations, and takes all appropriate action. This ensures the children's continued safety.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at this inspection.

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: Leeds City Council

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

Responsible individual: Benjamin Finley

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Jo Birtwhistle, Social Care Inspector

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

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