

17 October 2023**Agenda Item:8****REPORT OF THE SERVICE DIRECTOR, COMMISSIONING AND RESOURCES****INSPECTION GRADINGS OF 'EXCLUSIVE USE' CHILDREN'S RESIDENTIAL
HOMES – SEPTEMBER 2023****Purpose of the Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Panel with an update on the current performance of homes that are operated by Homes2Inspire for the exclusive use of Nottinghamshire children in care.

Information

2. The vast majority of children's residential home placements are commissioned from the external market, i.e. in homes operated and managed by companies from the private and voluntary sector. Most providers are privately owned companies though there are some providers that are linked to the voluntary sector in some way. The largest of these voluntary sector providers is Homes2Inspire (H2I) which is part of the national charity Shaw Trust and whose Chief Executive Officer is a former child in care.
3. The Council has a long and well-established partnership with H2I that is underpinned by a Block Contract which commenced in 2015 and took the form of the Council 'block booking' and agreeing to pay for 12 beds across the H2I residential home estate. This worked very successfully for both parties and a more expansive partnership-based arrangement has evolved over the past eight years, always underpinned by the provisions within the Block Contract for the care of Nottinghamshire children who live at homes operated and managed by H2I.
4. As well as increasing the number of young people living in homes operated by H2I, there have been two significant expansions in the scope of the partnership during the past eight years. The first was the development of 'exclusive use' homes, i.e. locally-based homes owned and operated by H2I for the exclusive use of Nottinghamshire children in care. The second followed on from the Council's decision in 2020 to expand its own children's residential home estate and led to the development of 'hybrid homes' whereby the property is owned by the Council but the home is operated by H2I via the same Block Contract for the care provision, together with an appropriate lease that allows it to set up, operate, manage and maintain the building as a children's residential home on behalf of the Council. The Council has latterly opened two new 'hybrid homes' in conjunction with H2I and has acquired a third property that is currently being prepared for use as a children's home.

5. As a consequence of the above developments, H2I currently owns and/or operates more children's homes in the local area, and accommodates more children in care, than the Council itself does at the homes that it wholly owns and operates. The Council/H2I partnership encompasses 11 homes of varying size, location and capacity that can collectively accommodate up to 33 Nottinghamshire children in care.
6. It is this set of homes and their current level of performance, as judged by their most recent Ofsted inspection outcome, that is the focus of this report. The table below provides a list of these homes, identifying which party owns which property and the potential capacity of each, i.e. the maximum number of children for which each home is registered with Ofsted.

Name	Location	Max beds
Meadow View House	Worksop	5
Layton House	Mansfield	5
Holly House	Chesterfield	5
Evans House	West Bridgford	3
Braidley House	Derby	3
Stirling House	Newark	2
Newbury House	Newark	2
Farrimond House	Worksop	2
Sudbury House *	Huthwaite	2
School House *	Sutton-in-Ashfield	2
<i>Virtual beds</i>	Nottingham / various	2
TOTAL		33

* = property owned by the Council

7. The table below provides the outcome and a very brief summary from Ofsted's most recent inspection visit to each of the homes.

Home	Ofsted rating:	Inspection Summary
Meadow View House	Good	Children make good progress in crucial areas of their lives. Staff understand children's needs from when they first move to the home. Managers and staff celebrate the children's progress and achievements, no matter what these may be. Memories are captured through memory books that children take with them when they leave the home. This supports them to feel cared for and loved.
Layton House	Good	There have been significant and positive developments since the last inspection and monitoring visit. Staff support children to see their families. The manager and staff ensure regular communication between them and children's families in order to update them regularly about their child's progress. Children are provided with continued support from staff, even when they leave the home in an unplanned way. A 'staying close' package is provided, and staff ensure that children experience a positive goodbye from staff, including a farewell gift and a meal out. This helps children feel cared for.

Holly House	Requires Improvement	This home is not yet good because the progress and experiences of children are variable. Some children have had positive experiences; others have experienced difficult relationships with their fellow residents, which has resulted in them being placed at risk of harm. In response to the challenges, the acting manager took decisive action. Some children have very recently moved on from the home, due to the risk children were posing to each other. Since that time, the children who continue to live in the home have reported positively about enjoyable activities and trips they have been on. Additionally, they report improved relationships with staff.
Evans House	Outstanding	Children benefit from extremely good relationships with staff who are dedicated and provide exceptional care. Children thrive and make significant progress from their starting points when moving to the home. Children say that they feel safe and secure and can discuss their fears and anxieties with staff freely. Children are well cared for and loved by staff, who are sensitive to their needs, these secure relationships help children to regulate their emotions. Children do not go missing from care and there is no need for behavioural sanctions.
Braidley House	Requires Improvement	Children are generally happy and have positive relationships with staff. The atmosphere in the home is relaxed, warm and friendly. One child said, 'The staff are lovely. They are always there if I need to speak to them.' Children make small but significant steps towards progress in the 12 weeks they are at the home. However, their progress can sometimes fluctuate. Staff persevere in building very positive relationships and providing support to children.
Stirling House	Outstanding	The quality of individualised care and support provided to the children by the manager and staff is outstanding. Children live in a warm, loving home, with a strong family feel. Children feel safe and secure in expressing their views, fears and anxieties. With the support and guidance of staff, children have a solid foundation from which they begin to manage their behaviours and can explore their sense of identity. Children in this home develop emotionally and go on to make excellent progress because of the care they receive.
Newbury House	Good	The manager and the staff team's commitment and dedication to children mean that children experience stability and security. For some, this is the first time they have experienced these in their lives. Because of the high levels of encouragement and support provided by the staff team, children engage in a range of enriching and enjoyable activities. Praise and celebration of achievements help children to feel good about themselves. This is resulting in improved levels of confidence and self-esteem.
Farrimond House	Outstanding	The quality of care and support provided to the children by the manager and staff is outstanding. Children live in a warm, loving

		home with a strong family feel. Staff make every effort to ensure that each child feels comfortable, showing great warmth and affection toward the children. Children build trusting and secure relationships with staff and have developed a sense of permanence and belonging. Staff support children to work to their goals, developing their independence and engaging in new experiences. Children are supported to feel and be safe. Multi-agency working is excellent which ensures that strategies to reduce risk are highly effective.
Sudbury House	Good	There was one child in the home at the time of this inspection. Staff have clear and shared objectives to support the child to achieve her full potential. They know the child very well, have established positive relationships with her, and have a genuine sense of commitment and loyalty towards her. She is encouraged to develop her independence skills and has learned and developed new skills which have enhanced her confidence and self-esteem. The environment is that of a family home. This supports the progress and experience of the child.
School House	Good	There was one child in this home at the time of this inspection, who is making very good progress from their starting point, sees the house as their home and has developed a sense of belonging. The child has some very good relationships with staff and the home is a happy place. There is a comprehensive risk management plan in place which includes behaviour management strategies. The child feels safe in this home.

Other Options Considered

8. To not update the Panel on the current inspection activity in relation to the portfolio of children's homes: this option is rejected as knowledge of inspection activity forms an important part of the Panel's remit in assisting the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties and acting as an effective corporate parent.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

9. The report provides an opportunity for the Corporate Parenting Panel to consider any further actions arising from the information contained within the report.

Statutory and Policy Implications

10. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, data protection and information governance finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (public health services), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and adults at risk, service users, smarter working, sustainability and the environment and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

Financial Implications

11. There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) That the Panel notes the content of this report regarding the current performance of homes that are operated by Homes2Inspire for the exclusive use of Nottinghamshire children in care and considers whether there are any further actions it requires.

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Constitutional Comments (SF 13/09/23)

12. The recommendation in this report falls within the remit of the Corporate Parenting Panel being 'to assist the Council in fulfilling its legal corporate parenting duties to ensure the Council and partner agencies act as effective corporate parents' (Constitution Section 7 Part 2 Terms of Reference).

Financial Comments (CDS 14/09/23)

13. There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers and Published Documents

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

None.

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All.

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