

1159884

Registered provider: Spark Of Genius North East LLP

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. It provides care for five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

There were three children resident at the time of the inspection.

There has been no registered manager since December 2023.

Inspection date: 28 January 2025

This monitoring visit

An assurance inspection took place on 11 December 2024. At this visit, the inspector found serious and widespread concerns. Following a case review the same day, it was decided that two compliance notices would be issued in relation to regulations 12 and 27 and a restriction of accommodation notice was imposed. This monitoring visit was undertaken to review the provider's compliance with the notice of restriction and their progress on the compliance notices issued under regulations 12 and 27.

The manager relies heavily on agency staff who are not permanently employed by the provider. The manager has adopted strategies to minimise the impact on the children. However, the high number of agency staff used means that children are cared for by staff who do not know them well. One child commented on being unhappy with the agency staff, describing them as 'random people in the home'.

Risk assessments are updated regularly and reviewed by staff. However, the two agency staff on duty were not fully aware of the children's risks. This means that staff are not able to safeguard children effectively in line with their care plans and risk assessments.

Staff are not working proactively to help children manage their behaviour. Key-work sessions often respond to incidents or times of crisis. There is insufficient time spent trying to help children to manage strong feelings. Children continue to have significant periods of time when their behaviour is not well managed. This can make children feel that staff are unable to keep them safe.

Leaders' and managers' oversight of the quality of care provided to children has improved. However, the process used by the manager to monitor and review practice is not yet embedded. This prevents the manager from being able to evaluate and understand what is needed to improve how staff care for children.

Supervision is not taking place regularly with all staff. This prevents the manager from being able to work with each member of staff to develop practice and be confident in their ability to meet the children's needs.

A manager has been appointed, but has not yet applied to register with Ofsted. The provider has not admitted any more children to the home.

Following a case review held on 29 January 2025, it was agreed that the compliance notice issued in relation to regulation 27 has been met. However, the provider has not met the steps within the compliance notice issued under regulation 12 and this has been reissued. The restriction of accommodation notice remains in place. The requirements issued at the last inspection have not been reviewed and are therefore reissued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/09/2024	Full	Good
22/08/2023	Full	Good
15/02/2023	Full	Good
24/01/2022	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
*The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b)) This compliance notice has been reissued.	2 March 2025
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 1(b) (2)(d)(e)(f)) This requirement has been reissued.	23 March 2025
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and	23 March 2025

have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that arrangements are in place to— plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child’s placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iii)) This requirement has been reissued.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This requirement has been reissued.	23 March 2025

*This requirement is subject of a compliance notice.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children’s homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children. Children’s homes must comply with the relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food,

hygiene, etc.). Homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a homely rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to The Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1159884

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Spark Of Genius North East LLp

Registered provider address: King Edwin School, Mill Lane, Stockton-on-Tees,
Cleveland TS20 1LG

Responsible individual: Stephen McGhee

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Lisa Gordon, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
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