

1183826

Registered provider: Sunderland Care And Support Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to seven children under short-break arrangements and one named child for an extended period.

There is one child currently living in the home. Two children were on short-break stays during the inspection. The inspector was able to observe interactions with all three children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in October 2018

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 June 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 8 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
03/09/2019	Full	Good
27/11/2018	Full	Good
10/10/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children enjoy their short-break stays and have built trusted relationships with the staff. Feedback received from parents and professionals is positive. However, the progress that the children make is variable. While the child that is living in the home is making good progress, the progress and experiences of other children remain less clear.

Pictures of the children participating in activities with the staff adorn the walls of the home alongside colourful noticeboards. However, the home is looking tired and worn in places, and previously raised shortfalls of the garden being overgrown and in need of some attention remain. A cupboard door containing sharp tools was left unlocked while children were in the home. This was immediately locked when brought to the manager's attention; however, it could have resulted in a significant injury if one of the children had accessed this cupboard.

Previously identified shortfalls regarding the setting of targets remain. Not all children have relevant and specific targets in place and, for some children, they are significantly out of date. The monitoring by the staff of these targets, and the recording of when children achieve their targets, is also variable. This means that not all children are consistently helped and supported to achieve their targets during their short-break stays.

When complaints are made, the manager responds to them promptly. While there are clear actions taken forward from each complaint, the manager does not formally respond to the complainant informing them of the outcome. This does not give the complainant the opportunity to express their opinion on the outcome of the complaint.

Children enjoy a range of home-based activities with the staff that meet their individual needs and interests. Staff take the children on outings in the community. This provides the children with opportunities to socialise in their wider community and to broaden their experiences.

Staff use a range of forums, including young people's meetings and one-to-one sessions, to listen to the children's views. Staff are proactive in responding to requests. They include purchasing specific toys, booking tickets for events, and developing a graffiti wall at the children's request to showcase their achievements. This provides the children with the knowledge that their views are important and that the staff are keen to listen to what they have to say.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children are safe living in this home, and are cared for by staff who know them well and understand their complex needs. For the children that are non-verbal, the staff

recognise their individual methods of communication including facial expressions and what these mean. Staff then respond accordingly to meet the children's needs. The positive relationships between the staff and the children have resulted in minimal physical interventions required, no missing from care incidents, and no sanctions.

The physical intervention log has been revised following previous shortfalls being identified. However, as there have been no holds used in the home since the last inspection, the effectiveness of the document cannot be evaluated. Therefore, the requirement has been restated.

Progress has been made on the quality of some documents, including the children's risk assessments and 'All About Me Care Plans'. However, this is not consistent for all children. Some documents contain conflicting information, some have out-of-date information, and one child's risk assessment does not contain all the known risks. This means that the staff do not have the most up-to-date information when providing care for the children.

Work has been undertaken to improve the quality of the impact risk assessments that the manager completes prior to children coming into the home. However, the most recent impact risk assessment completed does not include a manager's evaluation of the impact of the risks, or a decision on whether the home can meet the child's needs. This means that shortfalls remain in the matching process.

Recording of accidents is not consistent. There is an accident log in place; however, the registered manager was not assured of the accuracy of the document. Accident reports are not always on file, which means that the manager does not know whether they have been responded to appropriately.

Some children's files continue to lack the required information. This includes up-to-date personal education plans, education and health care plans, children's health assessments, and cared for review minutes. This affects the quality of information that the staff have available to meet the children's needs. This was raised at the last inspection, but has not been effectively addressed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home is managed by a suitable, qualified and experienced manager. She is supported by two deputy managers. Significant staffing issues remain, which is having a considerable impact on the ability of the manager to provide short-break stays and to welcome new children into the home. These staffing pressures mean that the management team regularly covers shifts on the rota, which affects the quality of management oversight and the pace of the improvement work.

The supervision template has been revised and the quality of supervision has improved. However, the frequency of supervision does not always take place in accordance with the statement of purpose. This means that the staff are not provided with consistent opportunities to reflect on their practice.

Staff have completed the provider's mandatory training courses and those specific to the individual needs of the children. However, the training matrix is not up to date. Some staff have completed training that is not recorded, and the recorded frequency of other training is not correct. This shortfall makes it difficult for the manager to effectively monitor the staff's training and development needs.

There continues to be shortfalls in notifying Ofsted of serious incidents. There is sometimes a delay in notifying and some incidents are not notified at all. This means that Ofsted is unable to review the information to ensure that the provider has taken appropriate action to keep children safe. This leaves children vulnerable to the risk of harm.

The most recent statement of purpose has not been forwarded to Ofsted within the required timescales. This means that parents, Ofsted and other professionals do not have the correct information to scrutinise to ensure that children are cared for in line with the statement of purpose.

A failure to meet the previously issued requirements under regulations 12, 13, 16, 35 and 40 demonstrates shortfalls relating to the leadership and management of the home.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within 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 staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(d)) This specifically relates to risk assessments and impact risk assessments.	21 July 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;	21 July 2022

and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(d)(h))	
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	21 July 2022
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must keep the behaviour management policy under review and, where appropriate, revise it. The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (2) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to physical intervention records.	21 July 2022
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—	21 July 2022

include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) This specifically relates to looked after children's documents being on file and the accident log, children's baselines, targets and care plans being kept updated.	
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))	21 July 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children, and other complainants, are informed in writing of the outcome of any complaints they make. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 22, paragraph 4.13)
- The registered person should ensure that training records are kept up to date and staff receive training specific to the individual needs of the children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive regular supervision so that they can reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 1183826

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sunderland Care And Support Limited

Registered provider address: Civic Centre, Burdon Road, Sunderland, Tyne & Wear SR2 7DN

Responsible individual: Graham King

Registered manager: Emma Charlton

Inspector

Paula Shepherd, Social Care Inspector

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