

1272220

Registered provider: Tees-Valley Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private provider. It offers care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2022.

Three children were living in the home at the time of the visit.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 September 2024

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	inadequate
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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: 13 April 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/04/2023	Full	Good
25/07/2022	Full	Good
05/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children are making progress but shortfalls in the leadership and management of the home have impacted on the overall judgement. This includes children's progress and experiences and how well children are helped and protected. Two of the three children were spoken with during the inspection.

Some areas of the home look tired and in need of attention. The maintenance issues identified were quickly rectified by the manager but had not previously been addressed in a timely manner. The outside of the home is well presented and has ample gardens that the children can enjoy, explore and play in.

Leaders and managers learn from the experiences of children who have previously lived in the home, to help make improvements. One child experienced an unplanned ending to their time in the home. The manager and staff evaluated what went well and what could be improved to inform future planning. This learning has supported another child to have a positive experience of moving into the home.

Children have been able to build trusting relationships with core staff. Children said they feel that staff are like family and they feel listened to. Children have experienced a range of different activities that they enjoy, such as trips away, including holidays abroad. A professional said that one child enjoyed going to a concert and went to their school prom, which was an achievement for them.

Children are making progress with their education. One child has recently passed their exams and aspires to attend university. Staff have supported this through working with agencies to facilitate visits to settings. Plans are now in place for one child who moved to the home with no education in place to begin school.

Staff are supported by a therapeutic team to help them understand the children's needs. Assessments are completed to understand children's experiences and needs. This informs work that is undertaken with staff so that they understand children's individual needs and respond in a way that is helpful to the children.

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

Not all information in children's risk assessments is kept fully up to date with what actions staff need to take to reduce risks. Although concerns about children are escalated appropriately to their local authority for a multi-agency response, known risks to children are not always detailed in their care plans. This means that staff do not have clear guidance of what steps to take to safeguard children.

Physical interventions are used when necessary to keep everyone safe. Staff are trained to support children and hold them correctly. However, some information recorded about how children are held is inconsistent, as is the manager's oversight. Likewise, conversations with children and staff do not take place after all holds. When medication is used to help children calm, management oversight is not always present. Because of this, the effectiveness of behaviour management techniques and their impact on children are not always understood.

Consequences used in the home are not reviewed consistently to monitor their effectiveness. Negative consequences are applied in response to children's behaviours and sometimes following a physical intervention. Not reviewing the effectiveness of consequences means that the manager is not assured that staff are using these fairly or appropriately.

Children's views are regularly sought, and children are listened to by staff. The children engage in regular key-working sessions in relation to areas of identified need or risk in their care plans, such as relationships. This has helped children take risks appropriate to their age and learn from incidents when things do not go to plan.

Children report that they feel safe living in the home. They have trusted adults that they can talk to and share concerns about their lives so staff can support them appropriately. When children raise a complaint with staff, they feel listened to. The manager responds to complaints appropriately, and information is fed back to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers have not ensured that there are sufficient staff working in the home with the required qualification. Of a staff of 20 only three possess their diploma.

The manager has not followed the organisation's procedures for the safe recruitment staff. Overseas checks were not reviewed of some staff and one member of staff was employed without a full exploration of their employment history. The manager has since audited all staff recruitment files but was unaware of the organisation's policy for international workers. This means children have not always been cared for by staff vetted as safe to do so.

Not all staff receive the same quality of support through their individual supervision sessions. The manager provides staff with regular reflective supervision and support. However, other supervisors' records do not show that staff are offered an opportunity to reflect on their practice or focus on safeguarding children. This means that managers do not have good oversight of the development needs and progress of the full staff team.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that children's files have all up-to-date information. Not all of the children's essential documents are held on their files. This includes care plans for children from their placing authorities, medical records and legal orders. This prevents staff and children from being able to access important and accurate information.

Staff are provided with mandatory training when they start working at the home. This helps staff to develop their skills and knowledge and helps them to meet children's needs while they gain experience in their role.

Team meetings take place regularly and are well attended. Meetings follow a set agenda and revisit tasks identified at earlier meetings to ensure these are completed. This provides an opportunity for the care team to meet and discuss important information relating to children and any practice issues.

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, The 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 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	16 October 2024
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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))	16 October 2024
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure;	16 October 2024

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 (3) (a)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.	16 October 2024

The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(d) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	16 October 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children and is a homely, domestic environment. In particular maintenance to the home must be actioned in a timely manner. ('The Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 15 paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice that allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of children. ('The Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 61 paragraph 33.2)

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: 1272220

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Tees-Valley Care Limited

Registered provider address: Tees-Valley Care, PO Box 547, Middlesbrough TS1 9HG

Responsible individual: Ann-Marie Henderson

Registered manager: Helen Prescott

Inspectors

Natalie Clark, Social Care Inspector
Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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