

2534102

Registered provider: Impact Childcare and Education

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by Impact Childcare and Education. It provides care for up to four children who may experience emotional and behavioural difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, there were three children living in the home. One child was seen and spoken to during this inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2023.

Inspection dates: 2 and 3 April 2025

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 21 May 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/05/2024	Full	Good
11/07/2023	Full	Good
24/05/2022	Full	Good
10/01/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff build effective, trusting relationships with children that live at the home. The staff recognise the children's differences and support their individual needs well. This contributes to the children feeling valued, cared for and cared about. Children are settled and comfortable in the home and are making notable progress in many areas of their lives.

The managers and staff know the children well and speak about them with pride; when things have not gone to plan, they speak with concern, demonstrating their caring ethos. The staff understand how the children like to be communicated with. For example, they have a set process for how one child likes to be woken for school in the mornings.

The children know how to make a complaint, and their complaints are taken seriously by the manager. The staff and managers ensure that children have their voices heard through children's meetings and key-work sessions. The children are at ease talking to staff and making suggestions.

All the children are either in college or in alternative provisions. Staff work well in partnership with education providers. This helps to ensure that children achieve educationally and identify and explore their future options. Staff support the children with their revision in the home. In addition, any barriers to education are tackled quickly by the manager so that children can continue to make progress.

The managers and staff ensure that the children are helped to learn and develop skills that will support their independence when they eventually leave the home. With the encouragement of staff, children develop greater maturity and self-belief in what they can achieve. Children develop a sense of security in their abilities and trust the adults who care for them. This means that lifelong links develop, with some children returning to the home to visit staff and catch up over a cup of tea.

Children are provided with support to meet their physical, emotional and social needs. Staff encourage them to have healthy lifestyles, for example going to the gym, playing sports and attending a mixed martial arts class. Sexual health and how to maintain healthy relationships are regularly included in key-work discussions. This helps children to learn how to keep themselves safe and make good choices when it comes to relationships.

The staff support children to access specialist help when needed. This includes advice from substance misuse services and referrals for specialist assessments. Where appropriate, the staff work with parents and carers to support them to accompany their child to appointments. This helps to ensure that children are supported by people who are important to them.

The managers and staff work with the children's social workers to ensure that when children move into the home, it is in a planned way. When this is accelerated due to circumstances beyond the control of the home, members of staff whom the child has met are available to ensure the child feels welcomed into the home.

Children are supported by staff to remain in contact with family members and other people who are important to them. They provide transport, supervise family time and work very closely with children's families to ensure that this is an enjoyable experience for all. Staff demonstrate a detailed understanding of the needs of children in relation to keeping in touch with their families, friends and extended family members, such as grandparents.

The manager ensures that the home is safe and secure and that all risks are appropriately assessed. The home is decorated to a high standard, and the children have personalised their space. The children have influenced the redecoration of the two lounges. Revision resources and lighter reading are readily available. Children have access to a variety of cookbooks to develop their skills.

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

The staff and managers identify potential sources of harm and take steps to reduce the risks to the children. Staff are sensitive and creative in approaching discussions around risk. One member of staff undertook a very thorough and sensitive discussion with a child about the risks of online grooming and radicalisation, which the child took part in fully.

Children's individual risks are well understood by staff. These are also clearly documented in risk assessments. This ensures that staff have essential protocols to address potential for harm. Most children have a history that includes concerns of going missing from home, disruptive behaviour or substance misuse. However, since living in the home, these risks have started to become less frequent. Good-quality key-work sessions and preventative work are helping children to learn more about how to keep themselves safe. As a result, missing-from-home episodes have started to reduce.

Managers and staff support children to take risks as part of their planning for independence. For example, work has been done with one child, following an incident on the bus, to help them to safely access public transport and travel around the region. Due to the work undertaken and regular discussions about independence, children now feel more ready to take on the challenges of becoming a young adult.

The staff have worked with children to create individualised behaviour support plans. These help staff to manage situations without the use of physical intervention. Restraint is very rarely used, as staff know how to support the children to manage their behaviour without the use of physical interventions.

The manager and staff have positive working relationships with specialist police teams and with the local Police Community Support Officer. This helps the manager to assess

risks in the local community and supports the children to have a positive view of the police.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and staff communicate effectively with professionals and parents and carers. They feel kept up to date on what is happening with their child. All members of the team attend meetings, and professionals report that the responses from staff are consistent regardless of who attends. Managers regularly undertake file reviews and audits to promote consistency.

The leaders and managers have high expectations of the children and support them to achieve their goals. Children at the home have competed in mixed martial arts exhibition matches, won awards for their gardening and found work in the local community with the support of the managers and staff.

Leaders and managers make child-centred decisions when inviting a child to come to live at the home. The manager is not afraid to admit children who have had difficulties in previous settings. Impact risk assessments are detailed and consider the risks and needs of all the children in the home.

The manager ensures that the home is sufficiently staffed. Recent recruitment of bank staff to support the full-time staff has strengthened the team. New starters are appropriately vetted before starting work.

The manager has effective links with services in the community and can call on them to provide training and support. Specialist substance misuse workers have attended a team meeting to support staff to better understand and respond to the needs of the children. This helps staff to have the knowledge and skills to meet the children's needs.

Leaders and managers learn from feedback provided by the children and staff. Staff report reflective discussions in their supervision. However, managers do not always record these discussions or the support staff receive following an incident. This limits the ability to share learning with the wider team.

The leaders and managers understand the plans for children and advocate on their behalf. Managers escalate with the local authority when the home is not provided with up-to-date information or plans. On one occasion, when changes to a child's plan had been verbally agreed, the manager did not ensure that these changes were recorded and reflected in the documentation from the home and the local authority.

The staff make clear recordings on the children's record, and the daily records are very detailed. Key-work sessions are linked to the plans for the children. However, at times, staff use professional terminology that may not be familiar or helpful to the child.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the information staff record about children is always recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that both the local authority plan and the home's plan reflect the same information regarding timescales for the children, such as when transitions are planned. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)
- The registered person should ensure that they provide staff with opportunities to reflect on their practice. In particular, systems should be in place to ensure that learning from reflections is shared with the wider team. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

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: 2534102

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Impact Childcare and Education

Registered provider address: 3-5 Brenkley Way, Blezard Business Park, Seaton Burn, Newcastle upon Tyne NE13 6DS

Responsible individual: Claire Atkinson

Registered manager: Joanne Franks

Inspector

Kirstie Sutherland, Social Care Inspector

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