

2563216

Registered provider: North East Lincolnshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority owns and manages this children's home, which provides care for up to four children with social and emotional difficulties. The home was registered with Ofsted in November 2019.

The appointed manager registered with Ofsted in October 2021.

Inspection dates: 18 and 19 November 2021

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	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: 3 August 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Ofsted inspected this home on 3 and 4 August 2021 and judged the service to be inadequate. It issued three compliance notices under regulations 12, 14 and 25. Children living in the home were at risk of serious harm. Leaders and managers failed to address safeguarding concerns and respond to environmental hazards within the home. As a result of these failures, children's safety was compromised. At the monitoring visit on 7 September 2021, Ofsted judged that one step set in the compliance notices with regard to regulation 12 was not met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2021	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

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

This home was judged inadequate in August 2021 due to leaders and managers failing to address safeguarding concerns and respond to environmental hazards within the home. The actions of leaders and staff left children at risk of serious harm. Ofsted issued six requirements and three compliance notices. A monitoring visit was carried out on 7 September 2021 to review the compliance notices. One step set in the compliance notices with regard to regulation 12 was not met. This step was reviewed during this second full inspection.

Children do not consistently receive the nurture and care that they need. The staff are not responding to the children's emotional needs and this has caused children prolonged periods of upset and frustration. Children's cognitive ability varies greatly from their chronological age and this is not reflected in staff practice.

Children's engagement in education varies. Together with the children and their schools, the staff are trying to remove the barriers to the children's learning. While some children have resat their GCSEs, others are struggling to attend their final school year. Regular meetings are held to adapt and review children's education plans to help them to achieve their outcomes.

Children's physical health needs are met. The staff help the children to attend their appointments and receive necessary and routine medical treatment. Children receive specialist support for their mental health. When concerns about a child's mental health are heightened, staff source additional support through the crisis team.

The home is now welcoming and homely, as necessary improvements have been made. The children help to make decisions about the decoration of their home, including individualising their bedrooms.

Children's access to communal areas of their home has been restricted. Locks were fitted to internal doors and these were removed during the inspection. The removal of the door locks was overseen by health and safety professionals to ensure that the integrity of the fire doors was maintained.

Change can be difficult for some children living in this home. The manager ensures that she involves the children in the decisions about other children moving into their home. When children move into this home, they experience a planned move with opportunities to meet the staff and children. Even with clear planning and assessment, the dynamic of children in this home continues to bring challenges. The staff manage these challenges through the planned day-to-day care that they provide to the children.

Children mostly enjoy seeing their families and friends although for some children these relationships can cause emotional upset. . The staff, with other agencies, help the children to navigate difficult relationships and implement effective strategies and boundaries.

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

Children are experiencing unauthorised physical restraint holds which restrict their movement. One child said to the inspector that these holds have hurt them and as a result this child did not feel safe in the home. The child is aware that measures have been taken to investigate the use of restraint.

Safety plans help staff to manage the risk of domestic abuse between children. The manager, in partnership with social workers and the children, regularly reviews the effectiveness of these plans. The time that children spend together is now structured, and routine welfare checks are made. Staff talk with confidence to children, and this enables children to have open and honest conversations about their relationships. One child was able to identify that their relationships were improving because of the safety measures implemented. Children's learning about positive and healthy relationships will support them now and in the future.

When children go missing from the home, the staff take immediate action to try and help them to return home safely. The children's welfare is assessed when they return and they are routinely visited by a professional who is independent of the home. This provides the child with the opportunity to talk about their experience. The information shared can lead to further action being taken by staff to safeguard the children.

Children's movement in the home is being monitored and restricted. Doors have been locked and bedroom door alarms activated. These measures track and restrict children's movement in their home. There is no evident risk for children during the night; they settle to bed, where they remain until morning. The children's risk assessments with regard to the use of door alarms should reflect the risk in the home; they should not routinely be implemented.

The medication procedures ensure the safe administration of medication. Regular medication audits, including the medication that one child self-administers, further support safe practice. However, a recently prescribed medication for one child does not record their name or details of administration. This potentially places the child at risk of harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is now registered with Ofsted and. is striving to improve the care experience of children living in the home. The manager has clear practice expectations of the staff and recognises and responds to shortfalls in the staff

approach to the care of children. She continues to try and embed good care into routine practice while developing staff's confidence and sense of worth.

The manager advocates for the children and fights for what is needed to enable them to achieve their outcomes. Examples include children being allocated a social worker with whom they can build a trusting relationship, getting a child a cognitive assessment to understand how to support and protect the child, and protecting all the children from unplanned admissions into their home.

The stability of the staff team brings familiarity for the children. The staff have varying levels of experience and qualifications in relation to caring for children. Some staff who have been employed as childcare officers for over two years have not yet gained the necessary qualification. This limits their knowledge of residential care for children which is pertinent to their role. The manager has implemented learning plans in response to this shortfall.

The children's wishes and feelings are heard and responded to. The manager has developed systems to help capture the views of all children. The manager incorporates children's feedback when adapting and changing processes. For example, following on from staff creating memory books for children, the children wanted to create their own. These books represent the memories from this home that the children identify as important to them.

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i))	14 January 2022
Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2))	14 January 2022
The registered person must ensure that— any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	14 January 2022

The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. 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. (Regulation 32 (1) (4)(a)(b))	11 March 2022
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that in line with Regulation 23, they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. These are fundamentally the same sorts of arrangements as a good parent would make but are subject to additional safeguards. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations, including the quality standards’, page 35, paragraph 7.5)

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: 2563216

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North East Lincolnshire Council

Registered provider address: Civic Offices, Knoll Street, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire
DN35 8LN

Responsible individual: Yvonne Shearwood

Registered manager: Tracy Jefferson

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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