

2594189

Registered provider: North East Lincolnshire Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority owns and manages this home. The home provides care for up to four children who may have social or emotional difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The registered manager has not been in day-to-day charge of the home since December 2021. A new manager has been in post during this period. The new manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

There were three children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection date: 15 February 2023

Date of last inspection: 21 November 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspectors evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

The children have good relationships with those staff who they know well. There are now new staff working in the home who the children are getting to know. Children enjoy participating in activities with these staff, which helps them to develop their relationships. The relationships between children and temporary night staff from an agency are often poor. To mitigate this, the manager tries to make sure that there are always some staff working in the home who the children know.

The children's needs are not well matched. The staff try and manage the children's relationships to prevent them from negatively impacting on each other. The staff's efforts are not always successful. Due to the dynamics of these relationships, the children do not have consistently positive experiences of living in the home. For one child, there are no clear plans for reviewing the suitability and safety of this placement. This causes anxiety for the child and for staff trying to meet the child's needs.

Most children go to school and make good progress with their education. Their attendance in education helps them to develop the skills they need for later life. For one child not attending education, their non-attendance leads to a lack of structure to their day.

The children are supported to attend routine health appointments. Where additional or more-specialist health support is required, the staff make sure that children have easy access to these services. The staff receive advice from a local specialist mental health agency. The advice helps them to understand the children's mental health needs and how best to meet these.

The safety of children

The staff have knowledge of the risks to individual children's safety. However, the risk assessment for one child does not clearly detail all known risks. For some risks, there is no breakdown of the specific actions that staff must take to keep the child safe. This lack of clarity may cause confusion for staff and does not help them to consistently manage risks effectively.

The staff have a good knowledge of missing-from-home procedures. They know the individual missing-from-home protocol for each child. When children go missing from the home, staff respond quickly and go out and search for them. They make telephone calls to the child and visit well-known places and addresses where the

child may be. The staff work closely with the police to help locate the child as quickly as possible.

Some work is done to try to educate the children about the potential risks to their safety. For some children, the record of this positive work is not consistent. Staff are effective in engaging some children more than others. As a result, risks for one child are not reducing.

The staff try and use their relationships with the children to support any difficulties with behaviour. The staff try and put clear boundaries in place. This is successful for some children but not for others. Work is ongoing by the manager to promote a positive approach to supporting children in crisis. As part of this approach, she uses a reward system. Some children respond well to this and view it as a celebration of their achievements.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager has applied to register with Ofsted. She is providing stability to the home and responds to the needs of the children. The manager recognises that the children currently need more support. To provide this extra help, she has increased staffing on every shift, including throughout the night.

The independent visitor's reports do not reach Ofsted on time, and, on occasion, the information included in these reports is factually inaccurate. This delay and the inaccuracies hinder the regulator's oversight of safeguarding practice in the home.

The registered manager submits six-monthly quality of care reviews. These reviews do not fully reflect on safeguarding incidents or the actions taken to keep the children safe. They lack focus and do not include feedback from children about the care that they receive. This is a missed opportunity to develop practice.

At the last inspection, not all staff had completed the relevant residential childcare qualification in line with regulations. The manager has a plan in place to help the staff keep on track to complete the course.

Ofsted is not always notified of significant incidents. The lack of information hinders Ofsted's oversight of safeguarding practice.

The staff are receiving formal supervision, which meets the requirement set at the last inspection. These supervision sessions give staff the chance to talk about their role. New staff report they are experiencing a good induction and they feel supported by the manager and the staff team.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/11/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
22/09/2021	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(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; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	1 April 2023
The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the child's placing authority is contacted, and a review of that child's relevant plans is requested, if— the registered person considers that the child is at risk of harm or has concerns that the care provided for the child is inadequate to meet the child's needs; the child is, or has been, persistently absent from the home without permission. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(e)(i)(ii)(iii))	1 April 2023
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only—	1 April 2023

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 has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. 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. 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)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a)(b))	
The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (7)(a))	1 April 2023
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.	1 April 2023

In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—

the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and

any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.

(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(b)(c) (5))

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2594189

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: John Branchflower

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector
Shirin Khan Mahmandi, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023