

2602142

Registered provider: North Tyneside Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is a solo provision. It is operated and managed by a local authority. The home provides care for one child who may have a sensory impairment, learning disability, mental disorders and physical disabilities.

During this inspection, the inspector spoke to the child living at the home and observed staff supporting the child.

There is no registered manager. There is an interim manager in day-to-day charge of the home.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 May 2023

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: 31 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/08/2022	Full	Good
30/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

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

High staff turnover has changed the core team of staff providing care to the child currently living in the home. This minimises the child's ability to form trusting and predictable relationships with staff. It also has a detrimental impact on structure and routines for the child.

Staff do not have a consistent approach to communicating with the child. At the time of the inspection, staff and the interim manager were uncertain about which communication methods should be used. Actions from the child's education, health and care plan are not followed. This significantly impacts on how the child can actively participate in day-to-day decisions.

Education provision has decreased for the child living at the home. A lack of formal and informal education activities affects the child's ability to learn and develop. When informal education opportunities are provided, they are not routinely captured by staff to track the child's progress. This is also a missed opportunity to capture achievements and changes in the child's likes and interests.

Consistent communication between staff at the home and the child's family is beneficial for the child. This provides a continuity of care that the child is familiar with. Staff encourage and facilitate family visits to the home, which has allowed the child to build and maintain family relationships. This promotes the child's sense of identity and increases the likelihood of meaningful relationships continuing.

The child's health needs are promoted by staff. Staff develop effective relationships with health professionals for the child. This helps staff to understand and meet the complex needs of the child. Effective communication between staff, a network of professionals and family means that there is a collective understanding of the child's needs. This helps the child transition between this home and his family home.

Social activities and opportunities enhance the child's life experiences. The child enjoys activities that promote their social and communication needs. Staff capture these events in photos that are proudly displayed in the home. This gives the child a sense of belonging in the home and that their experiences are important.

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

Guidance on the use of specialist equipment is not consistently followed to keep the child safe. This specifically relates to a safety bed. The child suffered significant harm in the home that was painful and traumatic for them.

Information in the child's plans regarding safe sleep arrangements is not consistent. This increases the risk that actions to keep the child safe will not always be followed by staff. As a result, the child is placed at risk of further harm.

The design and decor of the home do not always support the child's assessed needs. Potential risks in the home are not always mitigated. For example, there are some inappropriate radiator covers that are also missing protective equipment. Repairs, such as reinstalling equipment in the child's bedroom, do not happen promptly. The home is not set up with resources that could facilitate the child's education at home.

Records of medication are ambiguous, with no satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Staff do not always accurately record when new medication is opened. Records are not clear about when medication is transferred to be administered at the child's family home or how much is returned. This increases the likelihood of medication errors that could pose a risk of harm to the child.

Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are shared with appropriate agencies. The senior leadership team takes action to ensure that external investigations take place when a child has suffered harm.

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

The home does not have a registered manager. The interim manager is the second interim manager the home has had since the registered manager left. This has resulted in low staff morale, staff changes and instability within the home. Some staff do not feel they are adequately supported to fulfil their role.

The home is not functioning in accordance with its statement of purpose. Due to insufficient staff numbers, the child is unable to stay at this home overnight. Additionally, staff shortages have resulted in the interim manager and deputy manager covering for staff shortages. This has been to the detriment of management oversight of the home, including recording, supervision and inductions.

Leaders and managers do not have effective systems in place to monitor the quality of care the child receives. Processes to record incidents that happen in the home are insufficient. This is further compounded by the ambiguity around what constitutes as a recordable incident. Consequently, significant information is not recorded and reviewed by the leadership team. This means that staff do not have opportunities to learn from incidents.

There are insufficient processes in place to record complaints made on behalf of the child. This means that the leaders and managers do not demonstrate how complaints are responded to or resolved. This undermines the context of the complaint and prevents leaders and managers from being accountable.

Leaders and managers do not follow procedures to escalate poor outcomes on behalf of the child. This has resulted in the child missing out on structured education

opportunities for a significant length of time. Additionally, the home does not have up-to-date records from statutory meetings. This increases the risk that the child's plans are not accurately followed.

Leaders and managers do not ensure that all staff receive a thorough induction. Some staff complete their probationary period without completing mandatory training. Not all staff members have sufficient records of their performance and practice during their probationary period. This means that leaders and managers miss opportunities to address practice issues and provide support to staff.

Some staff have not achieved the required residential qualification in the required timescales. This compromises the quality of care that is provided to the child. Additionally, only one member of staff is trained in a specific medical procedure that the child occasionally requires. The interim manager has not challenged the decision that only one member of staff is trained in this procedure for the benefit of the child.

Staff do not receive regular practice-related supervision. Staff also say that they do not feel they receive adequate levels of supervision, team meetings and training opportunities. Consequently, staff do not feel valued or listened to. The established members of staff and new members of staff have not been afforded the opportunity to work cohesively as a team. This has created disharmony and lack of trust in the home.

The senior leadership team recognises the deficits in the home and the areas for improvement. Recruitment of suitable staff members is a challenge. However, the leadership is committed to recruiting capable staff through recruitment drives. This includes the appointment of a new manager.

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 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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; 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)(b)(d))	31 July 2023
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 staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;	31 July 2023

ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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)(b)(c)(d)(e)(h))	
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that the systems for recording medication checked into and out of the home clearly and easily account for the stock of medication in the home.	31 July 2023
The registered person must ensure that a disabled child accommodated in the home is provided with access to such aids and equipment as the child may require as a result of the child's disability in order to facilitate the child's communication with other persons. (Regulation 22 (4))	31 July 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;	31 July 2023

promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(x)(b))	
The registered person must— ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction; ensure that each permanent appointment of an employee is subject to the satisfactory completion of a period of probation. For the purposes of this regulation, "the appropriate person" is the registered person, an officer of HMCI, an officer of the local authority in whose area the home is located or a police officer. The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (1)(a)(b) (3) (4)(a)(b))	31 July 2023
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; if the individual satisfied the requirements in paragraph (3).	31 July 2023

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. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a) (3)(b) (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5 (c)(d))	31 July 2023
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its	31 July 2023

consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation.

The registered person must supply to HMCI, at HMCI's request, a statement containing a summary of any complaints made during the preceding twelve months and the action that was taken in response to each complaint. (Regulation 39 (1) (2) (3) (5))

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the design of the home includes any necessary adaptation to meet the needs of children with disabilities or specific health issues. This specifically relates to ensuring that items in the home are in line with the child's needs and plan. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.24)

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: 2602142

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Tyneside Council

Registered provider address: Quadrant, Cobalt Business Park, Wallsend, Tyne and Wear NE27 0BY

Responsible individual: Julie Firth

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

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