

2602142

Registered provider: North Tyneside Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated and managed by a local authority. It provides care for one child who may experience learning disabilities, physical disabilities, sensory impairment, and mental health issues.

There has been no registered manager at the home since 31 July 2023. There is a manager in day-to-day charge of the home who has not made an application to become the registered manager.

During this inspection, the inspector observed staff supporting the child.

Inspection date: 27 November 2023

Date of last inspection: 15 May 2023

Judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector 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'.

Outcome 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.

Findings from the inspection

Since the last inspection, the home remains without a registered manager. An interim manager has been in post since August 2023 and a deputy manager since October 2023. This has brought some management oversight to the home and reassurance for staff. The management team is imbedding new procedures and processes to improve the care provided to the child.

Safeguarding procedures, such as reporting serious incidents, are followed. This ensures that the regulator has oversight of these events. However, staff do not consistently follow procedures and record incidents when the child experiences harm. One example where the child harmed himself was not recorded accurately by staff. This impacts on the accuracy of essential information such as the harm experienced by the child and steps taken by staff.

Staffing issues continue to affect the amount of care that the child receives at the home; for example, the child has not stayed at the home full-time since February 2023. Recent staff recruitment means that the child can now stay overnight for more days. A constant recruitment drive is in place to improve staff sufficiency. New staff receive an induction into the home and shadow experienced staff. This helps to improve staff knowledge and skills to meet the child's needs.

Supervision and team meetings are an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice. Furthermore, staff improve their knowledge to better understand the child's presenting needs, which helps the child to remain settled and calm.

Staff respond to the child's health needs and seek appropriate medical care when necessary. This makes sure that the child has prompt medical attention.

The staff make sure that the home is a comfortable environment. Toys and learning resources are placed in easy reach so that the child can access them independently. Practical changes such as new flooring and protective equipment has helped to ensure the home is safe.

Staff are sensitive to the child's day-to-day challenges. The child is treated with dignity and respect. He enjoys a range of activities for social development. This includes trips to local attractions and sensory play. Photos taken by staff capture special memories. Additionally, records of the child's experiences use child-centred language.

The management team has built effective relationships with multi-agency professionals, which helps staff to share important information and provide consistent care. Collaboration takes place with agencies such as health, education, behaviour support and specialist services. Leaders hold services accountable to make sure that the child gets the external support and help that they need.

Risk assessments are updated regularly. They include specialist health advice and strategies to mitigate risks. The staff follow processes for the use of the child's safe bed. This helps to prevent future incidents of harm.

Increased attendance at an education provision provides stimulation and new experiences that benefit the child. The senior leadership team acknowledge that the child has a right to more education and is addressing this at a senior level.

The management team has developed processes to hear the views of family members. Senior managers respond to complaints and concerns received. They are committed to having a working relationship with the child's family to ensure staff provide consistent and predictable care. The family members now have a platform to voice their concerns, which helps towards reaching a resolution.

The deputy manager has implemented some changes to medication procedures. Staff complete training to administer medication safely, and are not permitted to give medication until their competency has been assessed by a medical professional. This improves staff confidence and safety for the child.

The electronic filing system is not always updated promptly. Staffing pressures have influenced how quickly staff upload documents onto the child's electronic file. This means that staff may not have access to the most up-to-date information to meet the child's needs.

The senior leadership team acknowledge and understand what further action is needed to improve the home. Since the last inspection one recommendation, and three requirements have been met. There continues to be gaps in management oversight, safeguarding, escalation, and staff completing relevant qualifications within the regulatory timeframe. Additionally, shortfalls remain in making sure that the child's communication strategies are implemented, and sufficient education is provided to the child.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/05/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
31/08/2022	Full	Good
30/11/2021	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 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 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— 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; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and 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))	28 February 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— take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and	28 February 2024

are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. 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 (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(vi)(vii)(b)) This specifically relates to staff recording of incidents	
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))	28 February 2024
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; 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)(x)(b))	28 February 2024
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	28 February 2024

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)) In particular, challenging when minutes from children's review meetings are not received; and when education provision is not provided.	28 February 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that electronic records are stored in a way that ensures they are easily accessible to all members of staff who need access to meet the child's needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2602142

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Tyneside Council

Registered provider address: The Quadrant East, Cobalt Offices, 15b-15c The Silverlink North, North Tyneside, NE27 0BY

Responsible individual: Julie Firth

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

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