

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 disorder and/or physical disabilities.

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

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

Inspection dates: 31 August and 1 September 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 30 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/11/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child currently living at the home is the only child who has lived in the home since the last inspection. Staff recognise and respond promptly to the child's cues and maintain a calm and caring approach. This supports the child to develop trusting bonds with the staff.

The garden has been redesigned and improved so that it offers a range of toys for interactive sensory play. Staff incorporated the child's views and wishes during these developments, which shows the child that their input is valued.

Staff include the child's family on some outings and holidays, and with celebrations of special, memorable occasions. This inclusive approach helps to create a sense of unity and promotes the child's emotional well-being.

Staff collaborate with education professionals and facilitate the child's bespoke education package. One education professional said, 'The staff are proactive; they ask questions and show professional curiosity to help them to understand how they can support [name of child] with their education.'

Staff support the child to improve their hygiene, and to increase their level of independence, such as with bathing and self-care routines. The staff praise and celebrate the child's progress with a wide range of personalised rewards. Vibrant displays around the home are a reminder for the child of the progress they make. This helps to further motivate and encourage the child.

Staff do not always follow the instruction to alternate a medical procedure, as identified as necessary in the child's plan, to help to minimise the child's discomfort. The records for when medication is checked into and out of the home are confusing, as they do not always easily account for how much of a medication is in the home. Additionally, some handwritten amendments to medication records do not include a signature. This means there is a lack of accountability for who has made these changes.

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

Risk assessments identify the vulnerabilities of the child and provide staff with strategies to mitigate these risks. Staff demonstrate that they understand the risks the child faces and that they adhere to the measures in place to protect the child.

Staff regularly review the safety of the home and arrange for enhancements, such as a smooth-edged radiator cover, to help to reduce the possibility of the child becoming injured.

The staff have created interactive visual and audio aids to enable the child to communicate their views. This supports the child to make informed choices and helps their voice to be heard.

The handover between staff has been developed so that it includes daily health and safety checks. This demonstrates that there is a collective and continual effort to maintain a safe home for the child.

Complaints are taken seriously. There is a collaborative approach to exploring and understanding the issues raised. Leaders use complaints as an opportunity to raise the standard of care that the child receives. However, sometimes, there is a significant delay in recording complaints. Consequently, the dates recorded are sometimes inaccurate. This hinders the possibility to track the timeliness of complaints being processed.

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

The former registered manager resigned from the post in July 2022. An interim manager was briefly appointed who has since been replaced by the current interim manager. In addition to these changes, there is a shortage of staff. However, staff volunteer to do additional shifts, which helps to ensure that the child experiences familiarity and consistency.

Leaders continue to fail to notify Ofsted of revisions to the statement of purpose. A review of this document showed that it does not contain all the information required, including the current management arrangements. One family member said that the latest management arrangements have not been explained to them, and that they do not know which manager they can contact.

There is still no system in place to ensure that staff have an annual appraisal, and none have been completed. This demonstrates that there is not sufficient focus on this aspect of staff development.

Staff complete the local authority's mandatory training. During their induction, staff undertake training on how to safely meet the child's personal care and feeding needs, before taking on these tasks. The induction records are sometimes sparse, which limits the usefulness of these documents as a resource for staff.

Managers' monitoring processes are not routinely completed. This means that there is often a significant delay to records and logs being scrutinised by leaders. Additionally, auditing processes do not always identify issues effectively, including shortfalls in the records for medication and complaints. Consequently, there is a lack of action to address these areas of practice.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)) This specifically relates to ensuring that staff adhere to the instructions regarding the child's medical procedures.	5 September 2022
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	2 October 2022
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.	2 October 2022

The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	2 October 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there are 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. 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. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- The registered person should ensure that the workforce plan details the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should ensure that all the children's case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. This specifically relates to ensuring that written entries to records and amendments include the accountability of the author. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. This specifically relates to ensuring that a clear and accurate timeline is included in complaints records. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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

Paula Kelly, Social Care Inspector

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