

2608872

Registered provider: Northamptonshire Children's Trust Limited

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority children's trust runs this home and cares for up to two children between the ages of 11 and 17 who may require support with emotional and social difficulties.

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

The home is led by a suitably experienced manager. They have been registered with Ofsted since October 2020.

Inspection date: 16 January 2025

Date of last inspection: 15 July 2024

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.

The inspector has 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.

Staff support children living in the home to make progress with their emotional well-being. Children have suffered significant trauma and challenging experiences before arriving at the home. The manager and staff create a positive and fun environment for children to live in. This helps children to feel cared for. Children are supported to build trusting relationships in a short period of time. Children are supported to understand their experiences and identity, which helps improve their self-esteem.

The house has a welcoming feel and is well maintained. Children's bedrooms reflect their characters and interests. The home is decorated with artwork. There are photos of the children enjoying experiences together. The positive environment is supported by a team of staff who ensure laughter and play is integral to the children's experiences. Positive role modelling is embedded in children's care.

The home provides short-term placements. These are sometimes in times of crisis and emergency. The manager advocates for children to live at the home for as long as they need to. One professional said, 'The manager's strength is communication with professionals, the best I have known.' Children are supported to access services that meet their needs. This happens quickly and effectively because of the knowledge and experience of the staff team.

Children are supported to attend education. They have school places that meet their individual needs. The staff work alongside education professionals to ensure children reach their potential. For some children who have been away from education for periods of time, this is a real achievement.

The manager has acted on the statutory requirements set at the last inspection. Staff have received training and had discussions in team meetings around language that cares. Staff remind each other to consider words they use in discussions and when making records. This is no longer a shortfall in practice.

The number of significant incidents is low. Children do not go missing from home. When incidents do happen, there is thorough oversight from the leadership team. Children and staff involved are supported to take part in debrief discussions to reflect, learn and move on from challenging situations. This supports the development of staff practice. It helps to build relationships and reduce the frequency of incidents.

Safe recruitment of staff is robust, and all necessary checks are completed. Recruitment is undertaken with a clear objective to seek the right people to meet children's needs.

When children make allegations, the manager and senior leaders take swift and appropriate action. The multi-professional approach to managing allegations is improved. However, the records of allegations are not all robust enough to support investigations should these be needed.

The home's manager is experienced and passionate about supporting children. They lead an equally experienced team. The manager promotes an energetic culture that professionals and families speak warmly of. This creates a nurturing environment for children to feel safe in. Staff enjoy working in the home and staff turnover is low. This means children are experiencing consistency from those caring for them.

Professionals and family members speak very highly of the staff, in particular, the leadership team's skills and communication. One mother said, 'This is the happiest they [her child] have been. The staff have worked wonders with her and keep her safe.'

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/07/2024	Full	Requires improvement to be good
20/06/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
11/01/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
09/03/2022	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; 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)(c)(f)(g)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that clear action is taken and recorded following allegations and complaints.	1 March 2025

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 2608872

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Northamptonshire Children's Trust Limited

Registered provider address: One Angel Square, Angel Street, Northampton, Northamptonshire NN1 1ED

Responsible individual: Sarah Kennedy

Registered manager: Scott Beasley

Inspector

Chris Haines, Social Care Inspector

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