

2623842

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and manages this home. The home offers care for up to three children with emotional and/or social difficulties.

The inspector spoke to two of the three children who currently live in the home.

The home and the manager were registered with Ofsted in March 2021.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 14 September 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress due to the trusting relationships that they develop with the staff. Children feel confident to speak to the staff about sensitive or difficult issues, and they are empowered to think through problems. One parent said, 'I 100% trust the staff to look after my child. They all really care about [child's name].'

Children's emotional well-being has improved. This is because the staff know the children well and they provide them with support and a high level of emotional warmth. The staff understand the impact of the children's early childhood experiences and they use a trauma-informed approach to provide the children with nurturing care.

The manager ensures that, when the children move into and out of the home, this is well-planned and sensitively managed. The creativity and personalised approach provided by the staff ensures that the children are supported to settle into their new home quickly.

Children are supported to maintain links with the people who are important to them. Parents value the quality of communication from the staff, which provides a good overview of their child's progress. One parent spoke highly of the staff and the quality of care given to their child, saying that the manager is 'amazing' and that the staff 'just get my child'.

Life-story work for the children has improved. Children's memory books are creative and of good quality. They include photos of the child's time in the home, and letters from the staff reminding the children of funny moments, positive experiences and how much they are loved. This helps the children to remember the good times in their lives.

The home is well furnished, homely and maintained to a good standard. The children are now able to access all shared areas of the home, and their views are used to influence how the home looks. The home has recently been decorated and there is a plan for further improvement.

Some children are making progress in school. Staff work closely with education professionals and advocate well on the children's behalf. When there are barriers to learning, children have opportunities to undertake home-based learning and qualifications. However, the quality of this service offer is weak, and children's progress is not well tracked.

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

The management team has ensured that there is a strong safeguarding culture in the home. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and, when a serious

incident occurs, they take effective action, ensuring that they follow the home's procedures.

Staff understand the children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. The staff work well with the children to help them to learn about the risks that they may face. Conversations are both planned and unplanned and are specific to the individual child's needs. One professional said, 'They have a good understanding of [child's name] needs; they don't reject the child and instead they show that they care. This helps the child to feel safe.'

Children are rarely physically restrained by the staff. This is because the staff use the agreed strategies effectively to help to de-escalate behaviours and reduce children's distress. The recording of physical interventions has improved, which allows the manager to monitor and evaluate the use of the measure effectively.

When children move into the home, the manager undertakes an impact risk assessment. This considers the risks to the individual child and those who already live in the home. However, on one occasion, all the child's known risks were not clearly evaluated. This means that the staff do not have all the correct strategies they need when they are providing care to the children.

The quality of the children's records has improved and they provide a clear account of the children's experiences and day-to-day care. However, some documents contain minor inaccuracies and contradictory information. This is not helpful for the children when they access their records.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. The manager is passionate about her role and is keen to develop the service. She has completed a higher management qualification, which has resulted in her feeling more skilled and confident in her role.

The manager is supported by a knowledgeable and experienced deputy manager. Together, they are highly committed to providing a high level of care to the children in their care and they have a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. They are focused on the home's development and they use feedback from a variety of sources to make continued improvements.

The dedicated and caring staff work well together as a team. They share tasks, lead on aspects of the children's care and share information with each other. They benefit from working in a supportive environment, where they have the opportunity to learn and reflect on their practice. Staff said that they feel confident in their roles.

Staff supervision takes place regularly and is thorough. Actions from staff supervisions are carried out and tracked for progress. The manager monitors the development of all staff and assesses their competency for the role. She allocates additional training and support where needed.

The manager shares information with Ofsted effectively when there is a serious incident in the home. However, this inspection identified one example where the outcome of a safeguarding enquiry was not notified. The manager is aware of this shortfall and has identified a strategy to avoid this reoccurring.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that, when considering children moving into the home, the manager thoroughly considers the risks and the impact on each individual child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, clear and accurate recording. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that they notify Ofsted with the outcome of incidents relating to child protection. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: 2623842

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Registered provider address: Newcastle Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE1 8QH

Responsible individual: Jayne Forsdike

Registered manager: Hayley Carr

Inspector

Catherine Heron, Social Care Inspector

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