

2668710

Registered provider: North Tyneside Council

Full 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 is registered to provide care for up to five children who may experience learning disabilities, mental disorders, or physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2022.

The inspector observed all five children and spoke to two children during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 February 2025

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: 30 January 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/01/2024	Full	Good
02/08/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children like living at this home. Most of the children have lived at the home for several years and refer to it as 'my home.' Children say that staff are '100 percent'. Staff work hard to personalise children's bedrooms to show the children's personalities and interests. This enhances the children's sense of belonging in the home.

Children develop strong and positive relationships with staff that are based on care and affection. Staff know the children well, which helps children trust the care that they receive. As a result, children make progress in all areas of their life.

Children have good attendance at school or college, which helps them learn and spend time with their peers. Staff help children with homework tasks to encourage their progress. They understand the children's individual targets and help children work towards them. Staff encourage children to think about their future options and help them make plans ahead of children leaving school. This enhances the children's learning and social opportunities.

Staff understand the children's complex health and communication needs. They use appropriate communication aids to help children to share their wishes and feelings. Staff advocate on behalf of children when they identify that other communication aids would benefit children, so that they have the most effective tools to share their voice. Additionally, staff use creative ways to gain children's views, such as games and activities. One child attends the 'Children in our Care Council and Young People' forum. This empowers children to understand that their voice is important.

Children are treated with dignity and respect. Staff use sensitive language when describing the children's needs. Children develop self-care skills ahead of adulthood. Over time, staff encourage children to meet their own personal hygiene needs. One child has made significant progress in this area from their starting point.

Staff help children to develop independence skills and plan for their future home. Staff celebrate children's successes and achievements. One child won a trophy at an awards ceremony in recognition of their progress. This improves the children's self-esteem and helps them to develop confidence in their abilities.

Children make memories while enjoying activities and celebrating special occasions. These enjoyable experiences help children to have new experiences and gain social skills. Staff take photos and store these in a virtual memory book. Children and professionals add comments or photos to enhance the depth of information for the children. This creative and colourful platform shows children that their experiences are important.

Children move into the home following well-planned introductions. The manager and the staff work together with family members and professionals to consider the compatibility of a new child with the children already living at the home. Staff visit the child in their surroundings such as short-break services and school. The child comes to visit the home where possible before they move in. This helps to remove some of the anxiety a move can bring and helps children to settle. For some, this is quicker than anticipated. One family member commented on how well the staff helped the family prepare for their child's move.

The home is large and spacious. Children spend time together and some children prefer to use the quieter rooms. Children enjoy making use of the large, enclosed garden. However, children cannot independently gain access to the garden due to the fob entry system on the doors. This does not help children to make independent choices.

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

Children feel safe at this home and can identify staff who they can speak to about any worries or concerns. Children enjoy spending time with the adults who care for them.

Staff prepare individualised safety plans that identify children's vulnerabilities and triggers. Staff regularly update plans, so they remain relevant to the child. The plans provide guidance to staff about how to manage effectively and reduce risks that children may experience. Children receive a predictable response from staff. Consequently, children have established routines which help them to feel safe and settled.

Staff help children to develop skills to stay safe outside of the home. This includes knowledge around road safety, travelling to shops and adults who could help them. This helps children to develop skills to stay safe and prepares them for adulthood.

Children are helped to develop socially acceptable behaviour. This helps to reduce the risks that would make them more vulnerable in society. This includes helping children to understand how to protect their own privacy.

Staff demonstrate and encourage positive behaviour in the home. They use a nurturing approach with children and follow de-escalation strategies. As a result, physical intervention is rarely used. Although incidents continue to take place, the frequency has reduced. This means children are learning how to manage their emotions more safely.

The management team's oversight of incidents does not always identify whether the action staff take is appropriate to the incident, for example when staff lock themselves behind a door for safety. Additionally, records of the incidents do not always help the manager to establish the facts of the incident. This does not help staff to learn and improve their practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a longstanding, experienced manager. A second deputy manager has recently been recruited to strengthen the management team. Additionally, a well-established core team that has worked at the home for several years brings cohesion and consistency for children.

The management team is ambitious for the children to achieve and improve their future outcomes. The manager is visible to the children and is fully involved in their lives. She has good knowledge of the children's starting points, vulnerabilities, and personalities. She uses this knowledge to ensure that children receive individualised care.

The manager leads by example and staff model good practice. Staff say they feel supported and there is a positive morale and working environment in the home. As a result, children are cared for by staff who are committed and motivated to keep children safe and feel happy.

The manager is held in high regard. She has developed good-quality relationships with professionals and family members. Staff from education settings say there is good communication from staff at the home. This helps to maintain a consistent approach to meeting the children's day-to-day needs. Additionally, family members are kept well-informed and feel involved in their children's lives.

The manager's monitoring and oversight of the home is generally effective. Audits of case files ensure that the records of children's lives are completed to a good standard. However, staff do not consistently record discussions that help children make progress. The manager is aware this is an area for development and has plans to improve this for children.

The management team uses team meetings and group discussions to reflect on practice and develop new strategies. This results in the ongoing development of the team.

Staff receive regular individual supervision and appraisals of their practice. These give staff an opportunity to reflect on their own feelings and receive support. However, supervision records do not reflect practice-related discussions. This is a missed opportunity for staff and managers to identify any support to improve staff knowledge or the care children receive.

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.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, just as in a family home, children can access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are undertaking and recording direct work with the children to help them to develop and make progress. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 16, paragraph 3.14)
- The registered person should ensure that there are systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. In particular, when incidents occur, the registered person should review actions taken by staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2668710

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Jackie Ingram

Registered manager: Marie Gallagher

Inspector

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

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