

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 and/or physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2022.

Inspectors observed all four children and spoke to two children during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 30 and 31 January 2024

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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 2 August 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/08/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children build meaningful relationships with staff because of the predictable care that they receive. Staff know the children well, which helps children to feel safe and understand appropriate relationships. Additionally, children have access to an independent advocate to help them share their views.

Children attend full-time education, which helps them make progress and achieve their individual targets. Some children progress to further education, such as college. The consistent engagement children have at education provisions raises aspirations and improves their future life choices. Additionally, school attendance benefits the children's social skills and friendships.

Children enjoy a range of activities for enjoyment and learning. The staff ensure that children's disabilities are not a barrier to engaging in activities. Most of the children regularly attend sport and exercise sessions at a local venue. This helps children to improve their physical fitness and confidence. Staff take photos of special events and significant dates, for example children's first day at school. This helps children to see that their experiences are valued.

Children have a sense of belonging and permanence at this home. Some children have lived at the home for a long time. Children's bedrooms are personalised and decorated in the colours they choose. Each child's unique personality and interests are clearly reflected in the decor of the bedroom. This helps children to have ownership of their own personal space.

Children are welcomed sensitively into the home. A new child can visit and meet the other children and staff. The staff learn about the child's likes and interests and ensure that the child's bedroom is decorated to their preference. Additionally, when a child moves out of the home, a multi-agency approach is adopted to help minimise the potential trauma a move can bring. For one child, staff decorated the child's bedroom at their new home and purchased furniture that was the same as the child already had. The way staff prioritised the child's needs has helped the child to transition effectively.

The home is large and well maintained. Comfortable areas such as the games room are enjoyed by children. Most areas of the home are clean and safe for children. However, one child's bedroom was not a hygienic environment due to items in the room that had not been removed by staff. Additionally, inspectors observed a DIY tool in the child's bedroom which could have caused the child or others significant harm.

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

Children have individual risk assessments and support plans. Children's plans include triggers and strategies that staff should use to help the children manage their feelings. Children can identify staff that they can talk to and ask for help. One child told professionals who know them that out of 100, the home is '1,000%'.

Staff promote positive behaviour in the home. Natural consequences are favoured, and staff set individual expectations for children so that they are realistic and achievable. Children enjoy receiving incentives and have a sense of pride when they reach their target, which helps to improve their self-esteem. Additionally, this approach helps children to understand how to make a good choice.

Staff rarely use physical holds to manage behaviour. On the occasions that this is necessary, children are helped to understand the reason they are held. Staff benefit from a reflective discussion to help prevent future incidents. The registered manager has oversight of any incidents, which helps to ensure that any holds used are appropriate and safe for the children.

Children rarely go missing from the home. When this does happen, staff follow procedures, and a multi-agency approach helps to ensure that the child returns swiftly. Staff talk to the children to understand why they stayed away from the home and to help reduce future incidents. This helps children to see that staff care and want them to be safe.

Allegations and complaints made are taken seriously by the leadership team. They are assessed and investigated appropriately and include necessary safeguarding professionals. The registered manager follows procedures to ensure that children and staff are safe during enquiries. This helps children and their families feel respected and listened to.

Staff understand children's complex needs and children are treated with dignity and respect. Staff help children to develop skills around personal hygiene in a sensitive way. This helps to develop the children's independence.

Most children benefit from informal chats and focused interventions from staff to help children to understand and manage their feelings. However, staff do not consistently record the discussions with children. This means that children's views are not recorded and limits staff's ability to act or advocate on behalf of children.

Fire safety procedures in the home are not safe. Locks on all the fire exit doors and doors leading to the fire exits mean that children could not leave the home independently in the event of a fire. The provider has consulted with a fire safety service but has not identified that the assessment contains inaccurate information.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a permanent and experienced manager. The management team works cohesively together, which benefits children and staff. The workforce consists of established members of staff who have worked at the home for several years. The children rely on routines and the cohesive way the staff work together provides consistency and stability to the children.

The leadership team provides a supportive environment through staff supervision and team meetings. This helps staff to reflect on their performance and improve their practice. When the registered manager identifies that a staff member needs additional support, this is responded to promptly. The registered manager has a focus on the emotional well-being of staff and signposts staff to obtain support when necessary. This helps staff to feel valued and ensures that the care of the children is not compromised. Staff said that they feel supported.

The management team and staff work proactively with other professionals in the children's network. Professionals described the staff as 'child-centred'. Additionally, staff help children to maintain relationships with people who are important to them, such as family and previous carers. This promotes the children's identity and improves the child's social network. If the registered manager does receive a complaint from a parent, this is taken seriously and responded to appropriately.

The registered manager ensures that staff complete mandatory training. Staff also receive specific training that is relevant to children's individual needs. The registered manager regularly reviews staff competencies, such as administering medication. This helps to reduce any medication errors and risk of harm to children.

The registered manager follows safer recruitment procedures, which helps to ensure that adults caring for children are safe. The staff either hold a relevant qualification or are working towards it. This strengthens the experience and quality of care that children receive.

The management oversight and monitoring of the home varies and some of the manager's monitoring and review systems are not effective. The registered manager consistently reviews significant incidents that happen in the home. This helps staff to reflect and explore other strategies to support the child. The registered manager ensures that any serious incidents are notified to the regulator.

However, the registered manager does not consistently review how children are supported to make progress, or how living at this home has had an impact on the children's lives. The registered manager's oversight does not always identify and act on shortfalls to improve staff performance and 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(s) 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(d)) This specifically relates to items in a child's bedroom.	1 April 2024
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))	1 April 2024
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; provide adequate means of escape from the home in the event of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(b))	1 April 2024

This specifically relates to locked fire exits and the accuracy of the fire risk assessment.	
--	--

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 other 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 all areas of the home, including children's bedrooms, are clean and regularly maintained to provide a homely and nurturing environment. The registered person should seek to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression when considering suitable locks inside the home. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: 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: Marie Gallagher

Inspectors

Miriam Dolman, Social Care Inspector
Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024