

# 2745434

Registered provider: Hartlepool Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to four children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2023.

There were four children living at the home at the time of the inspection and three children were spoken with.

### Inspection dates: 5 and 6 November 2025

|                                                                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>good</b> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------|

|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |             |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | outstanding |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------|

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

**Date of last inspection:** 6 November 2024

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 06/11/2024      | Full            | Good                 |
| 06/02/2024      | Full            | Good                 |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children are making progress in varying degrees. This is due to children's individual needs and the amount of time they have lived in the home. Children who have lived in the home longer have made good progress in managing big feelings. This has led to a reduction in incidents. One child who is newer to the setting is making some progress in adapting to the boundaries in their new home.

Some children experience difficulties with their education. Staff support children and work closely with education providers to find creative ways to encourage children to engage. This helps children to recognise the importance of education and learning.

Professionals speak highly of the home, saying communication with the staff is good. One professional said: 'Nothing can be improved, the staff do everything they can.' Another professional said: 'Staff have an excellent understanding of each child's needs.'

Staff at the home know the importance of family time for children. This often involves building positive and healthy relationships with family members and loved ones. One family member commented that staff are doing 'a brilliant job'. The family member went on to say: 'I know that [child's name] likes living at the home and I am confident that they are being kept safe.' Staff support children to spend quality time with their families. Where there are concerns, staff advocate on the children's behalf to ensure they are safeguarded.

The home is large, with a variety of communal areas and outdoor space for children to access for play and to relax. Children's bedrooms are personalised to their individual needs. The manager has identified areas of the home that are tired and need attention. The manager has a schedule for this work to take place. This includes important repairs that will provide greater security around the home.

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

Staff at the home have children at the centre of their practice. Staff keep contemporaneous care plans for children which are individualised and written for each child. This supports children to understand their care in a clear and simple way. Equally, risk assessments are detailed and provide clear guidance to staff to help keep children safer.

When there are specific worries about risks that affect children, staff seek support from partner agencies. This includes specialist work around knife crime and substance misuse. Children are supported by staff at the home with discussions to help their understanding of such dangers. Room searches are completed only when necessary to help keep children safer.

Some children are vulnerable to going missing from the home. When this happens, staff respond promptly and appropriately. They follow children's plans, which includes notifying partner agencies and important people in the child's life, and searching the local area. An independent return home interview is completed, which helps to ensure children are supported, as well as identifying and addressing any issues to prevent reoccurrence of episodes of going missing.

On occasions, children have left the home by climbing out of windows. Staff respond immediately to ensure the home is safe for children. The manager has contacted professionals to consider better ways to keep children safe. This has resulted in some new security measures being installed in the home.

Children are supported by staff with online safety. This includes an individualised plan for each child and educational work with staff. The result has led to children being able to access devices in a safe and age-appropriate way.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The manager knows the children exceptionally well and understands their individual needs. The manager leads a motivated and committed culture in the home, which aims to provide excellent care to children. This means staff practice is child focused, and children are supported to reach their full potential.

The manager prioritises children's needs, and this is evident from the point of the initial referral. The experiences of new children are finely balanced against the needs of children who already live in the home. The skills of staff are also an important factor to help assure the manager that children's needs are being consistently met.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with partner agencies and have developed strong working relationships. This helps the manager and staff to have the most up-to-date information regarding children's needs. This means children are supported in the best way possible.

The children benefit from being cared for by a core staff team. Staff speak positively about their roles in the home and one staff member said that they love working at the home. Staff are committed to their roles, and consider the children and their colleagues in the home as their extended family. Staff feel well supported by managers and feel their personal development is prioritised. This is reflected in the low staff turnover in the home. Staff are supported with regular supervision sessions which are reflective and provide staff with a forum to talk about children's care.

The manager is meticulous in ensuring they have oversight of the home. There are various monitoring tools in place to support this. This equips the manager with oversight of children's care, and they can identify any issues with staff practice. When areas of improvement are identified, the manager supports staff through regular

supervision sessions and access to training and resources to equip them with the skills and knowledge they need.

No requirements or recommendations were raised following this inspection.

## **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:** 2745434

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Hartlepool Borough Council

**Registered provider address:** Civic Centre, Victoria Road, Hartlepool TS24 8AY

**Responsible individual:** Laura Gough

**Registered manager:** Brian Thwaites

## Inspector

Kerry Chater, Social Care Inspector

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