

2780235

Registered provider: HMO NE LTD

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns and manages this children's home. It provides care for up to two children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, one child was living at the home and spoke to the inspector.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

Inspection dates: 28 and 29 October 2024

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: not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are skilled at building positive relationships with children. Children trust staff and develop a sense of belonging. This has supported the child to stay in the home longer than in any previous placement and to be able to identify a trusted adult. The child is making progress from their starting points.

The child can access a wide range of activities. Hobbies and interests are explored to identify activities of interest, and staff seek out new experiences for children. The child can participate fully in activities that are planned and assessed to ensure safety. These are captured as memories in a digital format, which is the child's preferred method of communication.

Staff use different approaches to gather children's views, which are documented in records regarding their care. The child's voice is heard. They are supported to attend their meetings and feel confident in sharing their wishes and feelings to influence their care planning. This means the child is participating in the decision-making processes about their care.

The child knows how to make a complaint. Information about how to complain is provided in the children's guide with direct access through a QR code. This has been effective and in line with child's preferred communication method. When children make a complaint, they understand the process and are kept involved in the complaint progression. The child said that when they made a complaint it was easy and they felt listened to.

Children who do not attend school are supported in their learning. The child came to live at the home with no education in place, but is now engaged in an alternative education package and has requested to be back in school. Staff are encouraging healthy sleep routines and providing additional learning opportunities to promote a routine for when an education setting is identified.

Children moving into the home are welcomed sensitively. The child is supported by staff to manage their own emotions positively and treated with dignity and respect; staff spend time learning about the child and their journey. This enables staff to support the child and develop a positive relationship, helping the child build emotional resilience and trust.

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

The child feels safe. Staff provide care in line with the child's plans to provide consistency and help the child feel protected. When the child's plan has not been followed and this is identified, it is addressed by the manager. This ensures consistency in the care provided to the child.

Staff understand the risks associated with the child living at the home. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly, and they provide strategies and plans for staff to follow. Written records are completed, and in some examples, they are linked with other documents to ensure clarity. Where some documents are not completed or not linked together, there is a lack of transparency, which is misleading and could result in a missed learning opportunity.

Staff are skilled at de-escalation. Staff use instant rewards to recognise children making positive choices; the use of consequences is rare. Not all consequences are recorded and records that reflect a consequence are not written to reflect a restorative approach.

The child receives support to explore and understand their own emotions in a positive way. Staff support the child to consider their choices. Staff complete written records to reflect the discussions they have had with the child. Consistency in recording and use of language varies in these documents. This has not been identified or addressed in the manager's review processes.

Room searches are completed sensitively by staff. The child's dignity is respected. However, the written records are not all accurate. Some room searches do not follow policy, and oversight from the manager is missing. Staffing ratios have changed, and lone working is in place. This impacts the fire risk assessment outcome, which recognised the waking night staff as a safety factor in the home. The change in staffing and impact on potential harm have not been recognised or addressed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by a qualified and experienced manager. It is appropriately staffed to ensure care for the child who is living there. The registered manager has high expectations and will challenge the appropriate agencies to ensure the right care for the child is achieved.

Staff providing care to the child are safe to do so. Safer recruitment processes are followed, and the manager is developing the team to ensure staff are skilled and knowledgeable in their roles. The child is involved in the recruitment process and selection of staff. Their feedback is valued by the registered manager.

Staff receive regular supervision. Supervision records show a focus on the child and safeguarding. Staff said they feel supported well by managers. However, there is no evidence of reflective discussions. The use of reflection in supervision is limited. This is a missed opportunity for further learning and developing practice.

Managers' monitoring and review processes are not effective in all areas. Some written documents are not completed accurately to ensure the quality and standard of care for the child. Shortfalls in management oversight, missing records and the use of language

have not been identified in the manager's monitoring and review. This means managers are not taking action to address them.

The manager is keen to use feedback to develop care. Any complaints made by the child are addressed to support learning. The manager has built up strong relationships with partner agencies and family members. One agency said they were impressed by staff and that their approach works for the child living in the home.

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 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 their full 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)) In particular, the manager should provide oversight where required and evaluate the effectiveness of interventions and written records. In particular, the manager should ensure effective staffing ratios to ensure staff follow the home's policies.	30 January 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including quality standards, page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: 2780235

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: HMO NE LTD

Registered provider address: Hallgate House, 9 Grange Terrace, Sunderland SR2 7DF

Responsible individual: Angela Riddell

Registered manager: Lorraine Hood

Inspector

Kate Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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