

2801182

Registered provider: HMO NE Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to two children with social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, two children were living in the home, and the inspector met both children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2024.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 August 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: 13 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/11/2024	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress from their starting points. This is because children are supported to develop trusting relationships with staff, and this enables the children to present their emotions in a safe space. Staff have completed training to understand the children's experiences, so they gain a better understanding of how to care for and respond to the children.

Children receive a high level of engagement and supervision from staff. Although routine and structure in their day has changed, the registered manager is making improvements to ensure that children are actively engaged in the home and community. This was observed during the inspection with children engaged in activities with staff and a planned visit to the Zoo. Staff also make efforts to widen children's social network by introducing them to social clubs and encouraging hobbies and interests.

The home has had recent improvements to create a more homely and accessible environment for children. Children's bedrooms are in the process of being redecorated and toys and books that were previously removed are being returned to children's rooms. Communal areas are comfortable and adapted for the children. Children also have access to a secure garden with play equipment that is age appropriate.

Children are starting to make progress in their learning. The managers and staff have worked tirelessly to support children in their learning, in a school environment or within the home. Arrangements are now in place for children's needs to be assessed within an appropriate school setting. Children have been well supported to engage in these changes and all adults involved are positive about the progress the children are making.

Staff support children to access their health appointments and are attentive to children's physical health needs. However, one child has been identified as needing additional specialist help and has not received this in a timely manner. This is due to a delay in making a referral to services that may be able to help and support the child. Therefore, although staff are aware of the child's needs for support, delays have hindered the child from benefiting from improved health outcomes.

Staff understand the importance of children spending quality time with their family. They build positive working relationships with family members and invite them to spend time in the home, including on special occasions. The home has introduced 'mammy time' for the children and this helps the children enjoy time with the parent, with the support of staff in aspects of the children's care, such as their bedtime routine. This is a positive example of how child focused the staff are in responding and adapting to the children's needs.

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

Staff help children to feel safe in the home. Staff work well together to ensure that children are safe in the home and community. In addition, they work with partner agencies to consider children's plans and how best they can help children feel safer and manage risks.

There are very few allegations made in the home, but when they are made, the managers explore these and notify the children's social worker and, when necessary, a designated safeguarding lead. The manager is working with the children's placing authority to ensure that there are appropriate systems in place to decide how best to respond in all situations. This approach ensures that any allegations made are responded to well and managed by a care team involved with the children.

Records of physical interventions are detailed and provide an understanding of why a child has been held or guided. Discussions with the child are linked to key-worker sessions, and the manager reviews records to evaluate the interventions, to help inform how to best support children.

Children's risk assessments are up to date and reflect children's current risks and vulnerabilities. Strategies for staff to follow are included. The assessments are complemented by a positive touch and handling plan. Lone working arrangements in care plans have not been considered. This would ensure that staff have plans in place to respond consistently to children, in a supportive environment, when they need additional support.

Children are given a negative consequence sometimes in response to their behaviours. Managers do not always evaluate the effectiveness of consequences, and therefore children have repeated consequences. Children's toys have been removed from them without this being agreed as an appropriate response to a behaviour. The manager is keen to have a consistent approach to managing and supporting children's behaviours and has provided training to refocus staff on how they support children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has experienced considerable changes to staffing in addition to interim arrangements for the registered manager, who has now returned from planned leave. Leaders and managers have moved staff between homes within the organisation, and the use of agency staff has increased to cover gaps in rotas. Therefore, the children have not received continuity of care. The registered manager recognises this and has made difficult decisions to move some staff who work in the home, in the best interests of the children. The recent decisions made by managers about staff cover are mitigating the concerns.

The manager has a good understanding of the improvements needed to enhance children's quality of care. Staff are to receive training to revisit their understanding of

children's adverse life experiences and how this affects them. Managers are considering how to enhance staff skills and are developing plans to make further improvements.

However, systems to ensure staff attend refresher training have not been effective. Some staff are overdue for their training in first aid and behaviour management. The manager was aware of this shortfall and has made arrangements for staff to complete outstanding training.

Children's records are available and up to date in children's files. Delegated authority forms are signed, providing the necessary consents for staff while they care for the children. In addition, the manager has worked with the children's placing authority to ensure that children's care plans are up to date.

Regular supervision has not been consistently provided to all staff. The managers' systems to monitor this have not been effective in ensuring that staff receive the opportunity for individual reflective practice discussions. In addition, agency staff who have worked in the home have not received supervision.

Safer recruitment is in place for staff who work in the home on a permanent basis, but not for all staff. When agency staff work in the home, there is limited information for the manager to be satisfied that all safeguarding and background checks have been undertaken. In addition, the identification and DBS checks provided do not provide all the information needed to include whether they are in date or hold relevant information.

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— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(c)(e)(f))	3 October 2025
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or	3 October 2025

if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home,

if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).

The requirements are that—

the individual is of integrity and good character;

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification, and skills for the

the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and

full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2.

The registered person must take reasonable steps to ensure that any individual who is working at the home and who does not fall within paragraph (2)(a) and (b) is appropriately supervised while carrying out the individual's duties. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(a)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d) (8))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when a child needs additional health or well-being support, staff should work with the child's placing authority to enable proper and immediate access to any specialist medical, psychological, or psychiatric support required. In particular, the registered person should ensure that there are timely referrals made to services. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standard,' page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- 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 and the needs

of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standard,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, the registered person should include steps within children's plans about their personal care and staffing arrangements. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standard,' page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2801182

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: Danielle Staddon

Inspector

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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