

2809166

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It is registered with Ofsted as a multi-building children's home. It provides care for up to 6 children in 3 separate houses who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2024.

All the homes were visited as part of the inspection and 4 children were spoken with.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 April 2026

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: 28 April 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/04/2025	Full	Good

Summary of findings

Children like living at the home and develop positive relationships with staff. Children make steady progress. Safeguarding practice is effective and staff manage some complex and challenging situations well and some children become safer.

A dedicated leadership team manages the homes. Their monitoring is effective and this contributes to making continuous improvements.

Some minor areas of improvements are needed. This is in relation staff not always recording discussions that help children make progress or demonstrate how they understand risks; and the manager not always recording any potential effect all the children living in the homes may have on one another.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress from the help and support they receive. Most of the children have lived at the homes for over a year and have a sense of permanence. Children are supported by a consistent staff team and over time, develop positive relationships with staff.

Children say they like living at the home and can identify staff that they trust and feel able to speak to. Children are confident they will be listened to. For example, one child was supported to make a complaint about an external professional. Another child regularly requests that staff send emails to professionals or family members to ask questions on their behalf. Staff understand this is the child's preferred communication method and support the child to understand the responses.

The importance of education is promoted, and some children attend school full time. The home is part of a pilot scheme run by the local authority that aims to explore the emotional challenges that can affect children attending school. Staff work with education professionals to identify more suitable provisions that can meet children's needs. As a result, some children are re-engaging in education activities, for example, with tutors and vocational courses.

Staff understand the importance of children's identity and cultural heritage. Children are supported to attend places of worship and celebrate religious occasions. Additionally, staff understand the importance of family ties and support children to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff communicate well with the children's families and also support parents with their parenting skills. This has improved relationships between children and their parents and in some instances, supported children to return to their family home.

Children are supported to learn and develop their independence skills in preparation for adulthood. This includes understanding finances and responsibilities to manage a home tenancy. Additionally, staff supported one child to gain part-time employment through job searches and preparation for interviews. This increases children's confidence and skills in preparation for adulthood. Staff provide opportunities such as driving lessons and understand why this is important to children.

All 3 homes are welcoming and represent children's wishes and choice of decor. Children are encouraged to engage in activities to promote enjoyment, build self-esteem and social development. Some homes include photos of children and staff enjoying activities and making memories.

The manager completes an assessment of children's needs before they move into the home. The manager is diligent in gaining information from other professionals who know the children. The manager takes appropriate action to ensure that staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to understand children's needs through bespoke training. However, the manager does not record any potential effect the change in dynamics will have on all the children living in the homes which are in close proximity of one another.

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

Thorough responses to missing-from-home incidents are slowly helping children to become safer. Managers and staff have sound knowledge about risks associated with missing and exploitation and staff know what to do when children are missing from home. Staff look for children and follow safeguarding procedures to support their safe return. The manager has forged links with local and national agencies to ensure that children receive a swift response and to reduce future incidents. Risks have not been eliminated but they have been well managed and they have reduced.

Children's plans are reviewed regularly and include actions that staff should take to help children to make progress and be safe. Children contribute to their plans and have a say about what they want staff to do to help them.

Staff understand children's individual needs and emotional responses. Some children are held by staff for their safety when de-escalation strategies have not been effective. There has been an increase in the frequency and duration of holds for one child. All incidents are reviewed by the manager which has helped to identify possible reasons for the increase in unwanted behaviours. The manager communicated with professionals swiftly and requested a medication review.

Children have access to specialist support when they need it. Staff ensure that children attend appointments, for example with mental health professionals. Additionally, staff benefit from consultations with therapeutic practitioners. The interventions help staff to understand children's presenting behaviours and implement strategies that help children.

Staff have supportive conversations with children about topics to help children understand risks. However, staff do not always record the discussions that help children

make progress or demonstrate how they understand risks. The manager is aware this is an area for development and has plans to improve this for children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced and committed manager. He is supported by 2 deputy managers, together they create a stable management team who lead by example and have effective monitoring systems. The leadership team know the children well, they understand children's past experiences and use this to promote a therapeutic environment for children.

Team meetings are held regularly and well attended. Minutes are detailed and specific to issues in the home. The manager invites other professionals to team meetings to share information to improve staff knowledge. The manager empowers staff by allocating lead roles in specific areas of the children's care.

Staff overwhelmingly say that they feel supported by each other and the leadership team; and that they benefit from this when managing complex and challenging incidents. This has created a positive morale in the home that benefits children.

Staff receive regular practice-related supervision sessions. Sessions give staff an opportunity to reflect on their own wellbeing, development and to receive support. Safeguarding is a focus of supervisions sessions and includes safeguarding scenarios to improve staff skills and knowledge on how to keep children safe.

The manager and staff work well with partner agencies. Professionals describe communication from the manager and staff as excellent. The manager consults with professionals who know the children well, about making changes to children's plans. These collaborative relationships contribute to children receiving consistent responses to their needs, helping to create stability for children.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff are consistently completing and recording direct work with the children that 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 only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the staff can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs; and where they have fully considered the effect that a new child arriving will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 56, paragraph 11.4)

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: 2809166

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Registered provider address: Newcastle City Council, Civic Centre, Newcastle Upon Tyne NE1 8QH

Responsible individual: Liz Spaven

Registered manager: Matthew Garnett

Inspectors

Cat Makel, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Amber Merriman, Social Care Inspector

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