

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. The setting consists of three properties that can accommodate up to 6 children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The home and the manager were registered with Ofsted on 6 November 2024. This is the first inspection.

There were 6 children living across all the properties at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 28 to 30 April 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.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress in this home. A strength of the home is the relationships staff have with the children, and the personalised care they deliver. One child has experienced their longest period of stability since coming to live in the home. Professionals report an increase in children's self-esteem and say that children thrive. One professional said, 'The child we have read about on paper is not the child we know now.'

When children move into the home they are well supported, and their needs are carefully considered. However, the manager did not consider the competing needs of all children when one child moved into the home. This contributed to a difficult period for children in the home and led to the child moving out in an unplanned way. Nonetheless, staff regularly visited and supported the child to assist with their transition and to help them to understand that staff cared about them. This has helped to strengthen the child's support network. Lessons have been learned from this, and the manager has taken steps to address how children's competing needs are considered.

Staff support children to engage with school and are creative in supporting children to overcome barriers and identify areas of interest for the child. When staff successfully support children to attend education, children can achieve the qualifications required to progress to college. Staff are ambitious for the children and support them to achieve their goals and have a future to look forward to. This has included helping one child to secure work experience with an architect.

Staff encourage children to attend routine health appointments and support them to make healthier choices. Staff are vigilant to children's health needs and when they identify a possible concern, they seek guidance from medical professionals. When children have a particular health condition, staff receive training to ensure that they are equipped to meet their needs. This helps to ensure that children to receive the medical attention they require. When children are reluctant to attend appointments or take medication, staff will explain the importance for their continued well-being. Children are making progress towards better health; one child has reduced their substance misuse, and another has stopped using vapes.

Staff make good use of the clinical team available who provide therapeutic advice. They ask for guidance and support which they then implement into their practice. Staff have learned to be reflective about the impact that their practice has on the care they provide to children and to adjust their approach as required.

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

Staff know the risks that children face. Children's risk assessments contain strategies that support the staff to help to keep children safe, and these are updated regularly. There

has been a reduction in risks, including the use of drugs. Staff are quick to provide physical and emotional support to a child when an incident happens in the home. This minimises the risk of harm because staff know the children and their needs well.

Staff rarely need to use behaviour management strategies. Sanctions are seldom used, and room searches are only conducted to help to improve children's safety. When staff hold children, this is to keep them safe. This is because the staff understand that the children respond better to positive encouragement. However, not all staff have a discussion with the manager after the use of such an intervention. This prevents the manager from helping the staff member to reflect on the effectiveness of their intervention.

When children go missing, staff and the manager are proactive in their response and identify locations where a child may be. They follow the child and liaise with those known to the child to try to locate them. For one child, this exposed an unsafe location that the child was visiting and disrupted a harmful relationship. This approach helps to improve children's safety.

The manager acts swiftly when an allegation is made against a staff member. This helps to keep children safe. The manager supports relationships to be repaired, when necessary, which helps to maintain trusting relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is committed to making sure that children receive good quality care. He is supported well by two deputy managers. The manager has a strong presence across all three properties and divides his time well between performing his managerial duties and spending time with the children. He is realistic about the areas that need to be developed, and he continuously seeks ways to improve the operation of the home.

Staff overwhelmingly report feeling well supported. One staff member said the manager is the best manager they have ever had. Staff describe him as being passionate about the children's needs being met and feel that this is because he cares.

The manager supports staff development well. He identifies training needs beyond the local authority's mandatory requirements, to ensure that staff have the bespoke skills and knowledge they need to provide safe care to children.

The manager is keen to learn from children's experiences that have not gone as planned. When one child moved on from the home in an unplanned way, the manager completed a 'lessons learnt' exercise to try to prevent such a situation from reoccurring. This demonstrates the manager's commitment to improving outcomes for children.

The manager and staff advocate for children, such as challenging another professional's conduct towards a child. However, on one occasion a child went without a care team meeting for several months. This was not challenged by the manager or escalated in line

with the organisation's policy. This does not promote professionals working together effectively to share information about a child.

Staff receive regular supervision. The supervisor discusses hypothetical scenarios with staff to ensure that the staff's knowledge is current. However, supervision sessions do not reflect on the day-to-day roles of the staff and supervision records are not an accurate reflection of discussions held. This hinders the manager's oversight of the performance of staff and their development needs.

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 registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure of control, discipline, or restraint in relation to a child in the home, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(b))	1 July 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should have systems in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice which allows them to reflect on their practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- The registered person should evidence what they have done to achieve engagement, including any actions taken to escalate concerns. In particular, to enable statutory children's meetings to take place. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 11, paragraph 2.3)

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 address: Newcastle City Council, Civic Centre, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8QH

Responsible individual: Liz Spaven

Registered manager: Matthew Garnett

Inspector

Julia Hagan, social care inspector

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