

2811916

Registered provider: HMO NE Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

The manager and the home registered with Ofsted in January 2025.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 June 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	requires improvement to be 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

This is the home's first inspection after registration. One child was living in the home at the time of the inspection and inspectors met with the child.

The move into the home for the child was well planned. Staff supported the child to have introductions to the home before moving in and listened to the child's views about how this should take place. This helped the child settle in with ease and showed at an early stage that their views are important.

The child is supported to engage with their learning. When the child has struggled to be prepared for their school day, staff encourage and support the child and take them to school. This support has helped the child to take examinations. Staff reward and celebrate the child's achievements and this shows the child how proud staff are of them.

The child's views are important to staff. Children's meetings take place to discuss the running of the home. The child is open about any improvements that can be made and discusses what is going well. The manager writes a letter to the child after each meeting and this provides a summary of the meeting and lets the child know that their views have been listened to and what actions staff have taken.

Staff work well with the child to have conversations about their day-to-day arrangements, education and independence. This leads to the child being engaged in some activities of their choice. They also do independence work and explore work experience and options for the child's future skills and employment.

The child's essential records are mainly up to date. The placing local authority care plan and review minutes are held on the child's files and record the child's progress and some areas of regression in these early days of living in the home. However, the child does not have a pathway plan in place. There has not been any challenge from the staff to gain this plan for the child to help the child understand what their future may hold.

The child is registered with essential medical services. Staff are proactive in ensuring the child attends appointments for their physical health. This includes the child receiving immunisations that they had previously missed. However, escalation for the child to receive specialist therapeutic support does not take place in a timely manner, therefore leaving the child without the support they need. Although the staff have developed positive working relationships with the placing authority, they have not worked effectively to advocate for the child to access specialist support.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The child's risk assessment does not reflect their known risks and vulnerabilities. Expert assessments of known risks are not detailed in the child's plan and staff lack understanding of the assessed risks and how these should be managed. Decision-making to explore another child moving into the home has therefore not taken into consideration the impact of these known risks and how this can be managed with another child in the home. The lack of understanding could place children at risk of harm.

Activity risk assessments are not individualised to the child, as these are generic. Therefore, staff do not have strategies to help keep the child safer when they go out into the community or strategies to best support the child.

The home's safe recruitment policy is not consistently followed. Although there is a policy in place to ensure that there is a thorough scrutiny of adults who come to work in the home, the manager does not follow the procedures to ensure full information is gained. The manager is making changes to their involvement in recruitment to ensure the policy is followed.

There are no systems in place for the management of negative consequences. Although staff will put consequences in place, these are not natural consequences or restorative. Therefore, there is no system in place for the manager to have oversight and evaluate their effectiveness.

There have been no incidents of physical intervention in the home or episodes of going missing since the home opened. Staff are trained in both areas so that they know how to support the child in a crisis or when they are missing.

Allegations are rare but well-managed in the home. There has only been one allegation raised since the home opened and the manager followed a thorough process to explore this. In addition, the manager was open with professionals about the concerns and worked with partner agencies and the local area designated officer to try to reach a safe conclusion.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has strong systems in place to ensure he has effective oversight of the home. This includes monthly monitoring forms that are provided for senior managers, such as the responsible individual, to ensure they are appraised of the progress in the home. The manager can highlight if there are any areas for improvement, and what is going well.

Staff are well supported through regular supervision sessions with a manager. The sessions are well recorded and provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice, children and their own development. In addition, the manager regularly records

monitoring and support sessions and this provides a summary of staff progress through their probation periods and induction. The support in place adds to the feedback from staff that they are well supported by the manager.

The home has a small team of experienced and qualified staff who work in the home. To ensure continuity of care for the child, the manager has taken up gaps in shifts previously to reduce the need for agency staff. This has reduced overtime, and the manager will only work additional shifts to spend quality time with the child.

The manager identified that the staff would need training specific to the child in their care. Additional training is being explored for staff to have training to support a trauma-informed response. The manager is keen to ensure that staff develop in their roles. He encourages staff to be proactive in their learning and how this can apply to their practice regarding regulations.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's plans and risk assessments include children's known risks and work identified to reduce risks, and that activity risk assessments are individualised to the child. In addition, the registered person must be satisfied that risks are fully assessed before moving additional children into the home.	8 August 2025
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans;	8 August 2025

seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(a)(b)(c))	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;	8 August 2025

within 48 hours of the use of the measure, 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; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(i)ii)(c))

In particular, the registered person must ensure there are systems in place to record, monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of negative consequences used within the home.

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure good employment practice. They should ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, the registered person must ensure that the provider's safe recruitment policy and procedures are followed. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards, page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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: 2811916

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: Kevin Tennant

Inspectors

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector
Gary Smithson, Social Care Inspector

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