

2819607

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 organisation. It provides care for up to two children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2025. This was the home's first inspection.

There was one child living in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 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	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: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The child received a well-planned move into the home. Staff took time to gather information from family and professionals. Additional meetings took place to inform the assessment process and design a bespoke plan. When things changed, the staff were flexible and provided additional support, responding to the child's circumstances. This created a positive experience for the child.

The staff understand how the child communicates, and this helps staff to be more effective when supporting children during difficult times. Journals and fidget toys are successful outlets for children to help them manage their emotions. These methods are now used daily and are effective in developing the child's ability to regulate themselves.

The child's physical health needs are being met. The child attends routine health appointments and their annual health assessment. When specialist services are required, the child receives encouragement and support to attend. As a result, the child receives the treatment they need to maintain good physical health.

The staff work closely with the child and education professionals to improve the child's school attendance. Regular meetings take place to review progress and agree actions to engage the child over time. Staff use incentives to help to motivate the child and encourage their engagement. The staff's commitment to supporting the child has resulted in an increase in the child's school attendance and reports of their positive engagement.

Children have appropriate and carefully assessed time with their family and friends. The staff work to reduce risk related to family time and liaise with children's families and the local authority to review plans. Staff work proactively with parents to provide regular feedback in weekly reports.

There has been a high turnover of staff since the home opened. Consequently, children find it hard to build secure relationships with staff. Due to the number of vacancies in the staff team, there is a reliance on agency workers and staff from other homes. This does not provide the child with a sense of stability or consistent care.

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

Staff are familiar with the child's plans and risk assessments. The documents clearly set out the child's risks and guide staff in how to manage those risks. This ensures that staff are aware of how to care for the child and keep them safe when concerns arise.

Staff act quickly to locate the child when they are missing from home. This helps them to ensure the child's safe return to the home as quickly as possible. When the child returns, the local authority offers a return home interview. This is an opportunity for staff to understand the episode and why the child went missing from home. This helps staff to review risk assessments and plans to ensure that they are taking effective action to safeguard the child.

The manager adheres to safer recruitment practices when employing new staff. Staff are thoroughly checked and vetted, and any inconsistencies are explored before staff work with the child. This attention to detail prevents those unsuitable to be working with children from doing so.

The manager has not followed the correct procedures when the child made an allegation of harm against her. The manager did not immediately report the allegation to the responsible individual and referred herself to the local authority designated officer. Furthermore, after the responsible individual was informed, the recording of the allegation was still completed by the manager. There was a member of staff present during the alleged incident whose account verified that no assault took place. However, this practice does not ensure that there is a robust and independent investigation of concerns raised by the child to ensure that they are appropriately safeguarded from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager maintains good oversight of the home through the use of effective monitoring systems. Monthly audits are completed, which enable the manager to identify areas for improvement. The manager uses a colour-coded rating to visually illustrate which actions take priority. This helps to ensure that issues are addressed appropriately and according to need.

Care team meetings take place regularly and are attended by parents, the local authority, school and the home's care staff. They allow for reflective discussions about what is going well for the child and what actions are needed to improve the child's progress and experiences. The meetings are clearly recorded and include the actions to be completed. The care team reviews those actions to track progress against the child's plans. The meetings help to improve collaborative working, family and professional relationships and the outcomes for the child.

The staff receive regular and effective supervision from their line manager and say that they feel well supported. Supervision sessions allow staff to have reflective discussions about the child and also enable staff to learn from incidents and develop their practice. Line managers present scenarios to support staff development and help to familiarise staff with policies and procedures. When areas of practice could improve, this is addressed quickly and effectively through open and honest conversations.

Some documents are not present on the child's file. The manager does not escalate requests for missing documents with the local authority or health services. As a result, important documents are not available, and the information contained in them does not form part of the child's plans.

The manager did not respond appropriately following a complaint made by the child. The child raised a complaint about their care with staff. However, this was not recorded, and the complaints procedure was not followed. This means that there is no record of the complaint or the actions taken to address the complaint satisfactorily.

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— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))	29 July 2025
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 fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(e))	29 July 2025
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.	29 July 2025

In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.

The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (1) (2) (3))

Recommendation

- The registered person should evidence what they have done to achieve engagement, including any actions taken to escalate concerns in line with the home's escalation policy. ('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: 2819607

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: Ann-Marie Lang

Inspector

Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

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