

SC033127

Registered provider: North East Lincolnshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to 11 children with learning and/or physical disabilities. The home is divided into three smaller homes. Two of these provide long-term care for children and one provides short-break services.

The registered manager has been in post since 2010. During this inspection, the registered manager was not in work. There is an acting manager in place.

Inspection dates: 11 and 12 October 2022

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: 14 July 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/07/2021	Full	Good
21/01/2020	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/12/2018	Full	Good
05/03/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy good relationships with staff and staff know the children very well. They know when they are happy or becoming upset. At times, some children do not like other children's behaviour. Staff are aware of this and act to support children, so they do not affect each other negatively. Staff work hard during times of staff shortages to cover shifts. This keeps consistency for the children.

Most areas of the home are well maintained, homely and comfortable. In one area of the home, there are potential hazards that need repair. Although the acting manager makes requests for the damage to be fixed, the response to these by the local authority is slow and means that parts of this home are not of an acceptable standard for children.

Most children regularly attend education. For those currently out of education, managers and staff provide a structured day with stimulating and educational activities to promote learning until the children are ready to return to the classroom. Staff work closely with education professionals to share communication methods and information, which means that children benefit from a consistent approach to their care and support in the home and in their schools.

The children become more independent and grow in confidence. They learn skills such as going shopping and how to look after their money. One child has learned to pay for his own bus ticket. Other children work on learning how to spend time positively without staff in the community.

For children who live permanently in the home, staff help them to understand why they cannot live with their families. Family time is very much encouraged and facilitated by staff. The time that children spend with their families helps to nurture and maintain the bonds that they have with their parents, siblings and other loved ones.

The children enjoy a range of activities. For some, this is good progress as they have not been able to have regular access to the community. Activities help to improve children's social skills and confidence. The activities that children enjoy include swimming, climbing, abseiling, and visits to the beach and to local parks. The activities help children to enjoy new experiences and learn new skills.

The staff support children to attend medical appointments and help them to stay healthy. They promote healthy eating and active lifestyles. Specialist services also provide advice and guidance to staff to help them to understand how best to support children's emotional well-being.

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

Physical restraint is only used as a last resort. Any physical restraints are low-level holds used for the shortest time possible to prevent children from harming themselves or others. The holds are in line with approved guidance. Recordings of incidents include debriefs with staff and children to encourage learning and reflection. This reduces the likelihood of incidents reoccurring and reduces risks to the children.

Risk assessments and behaviour support plans are individualised. These documents clearly identify the known risks of each child. They provide staff with actions to follow to reduce risks. This helps to ensure that children receive a consistent response when they are in crisis.

The staff know how to keep the children safe. They receive training to help them to do this. The staff know how to report concerns and they know who to report them to. The staff understand the risks to the children, including the need to help children to stay safe online.

Managers are quick to act when allegations are made against the staff. They follow procedures and work closely with other professionals. They share information effectively with professionals, such as the police and social workers, to support investigations. This way of working makes sure that decisions are made collectively.

Where appropriate, children learn about danger. This learning helps them to recognise risk and means that some children are able to access the local community independently. For children who require high levels of supervision to stay safe, there are sufficient staff and a range of specialist safety equipment to help them to do this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is not in work. The acting manager leads the staff team by example. The acting manager knows how important it is to make sure that the children have staff they know supporting them. She goes out of her way to make sure that they have the stability they need.

Due to some staff shortages, the acting manager has been balancing management duties with supporting and working with the children. As a result, some management tasks are incomplete. The acting manager is getting on top of these duties and knows the areas of strength and areas that she needs to develop. She has a clear plan to do this.

The staff undertake regular training. Some training to meet the children's specific needs, such as gastrostomy tube feeding and the administration of oxygen, is done in preparation for children accessing the short-break service. Other specific training, such as autism spectrum disorder, sexualised behaviour or specialist communication

training, is not yet complete. This is a missed opportunity to enhance care for the children.

The staff said that the acting manager is supporting them well. They report being able to talk to her about any worries. One member of staff said, 'The door is always open for you to talk to her.'

Supervision for the manager and some staff is not up to date. Yearly appraisals are not completed as required. This does not help the manager to address issues for children or the service. For staff, this means that they do not get the chance to reflect on their practice. The lack of appraisals does not help them to set goals and targets for the year ahead.

The acting manager works closely with other professionals. The professionals she works with include teachers, medical staff and social workers. The acting manager is a good advocate for the children. She acts on their behalf, so their wishes and feelings are heard. She shares information effectively with other professionals to make sure that the children have the help that they need.

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, 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 the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(d))	1 December 2022
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c))	1 December 2022

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. In particular, staff should receive training to meet children's specific needs, such as autism spectrum disorder, sexualised behaviour and specialist communication needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', paragraph 10.11, page 53)

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: SC033127

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North East Lincolnshire Council

Registered provider address: Civic Offices, Knoll Street, Cleethorpes, Lincolnshire DN35 8LN

Responsible individual: Vicki Lawson

Registered manager: Karen Stones

Inspectors

Jamie Richardson, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

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