

SC033152

Registered provider: North Lincolnshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority and provides short break care for up to five children and long-term care for one child. Children who stay in the home have learning disabilities, and may also have physical disabilities.

The manager was registered in July 2021, and is currently supporting the management arrangements at another of the provider's settings.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
11/10/2021	Full	Outstanding
03/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
17/04/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children staying in the home have warm and trusting relationships with staff. Staff are knowledgeable about children's individual physical health needs and emotional well-being. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that children receive appropriate support during their stays.

Staff understand each child's preferred method of communication and adapt their own communication to make sure children are listened to. Supportive communication tools, such as photos and symbols, are used and displayed throughout the home. This helps children who may not use words to communicate and to make simple decisions and choices about their daily lives.

Staff work closely with children's families and provide outreach support when needed. This helps parents understand the care that is provided to their children when they stay at the home, but also gives them the opportunity to mirror this care. Parents and families are involved in their children's stay at the home. This is reassuring for parents and families.

The home environment is comfortable, and children's bedrooms have been personalised to reflect their likes and interests. Staff encourage children to gather around the dining table at mealtimes, and create a relaxed atmosphere so that children can socialise. There is a large garden area with play equipment, and the children enjoy the communal spaces the home and garden offer.

Children are well supported by staff when they are introduced to the home. Staff gather important information to create care plans that are tailored to the needs of individual children and their families. This involves a series of visits to the home until the child is ready to stay overnight. This supports the child to build relationships with staff and the other children and helps them gain confidence.

Most children make educational progress in the home. Children's targets are linked to their education plans, and show staff how to support children to achieve their goals. Two children are achieving their targets well. However, some children's development plans have not been reviewed for several months. This is a missed opportunity to assess children's progress and for children to further develop important skills to help their informal learning.

The views and opinions of children who communicate verbally about the quality of care provided are captured well. Staff supported one child effectively to express their views, and promoted the child's rights. However, there are some children who use alternative methods of communication. Staff are not creative in how to capture their opinions. This means some children's views are not reflected as clearly as others.

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

Children have risk assessments that identify the specific risks they face. The staff consider and address all identified risks to children. This includes what may cause children to be anxious and upset. Staff produce plans which they follow consistently, using distraction and other strategies. This helps children to manage their emotions, and staff rarely need to physically intervene with children to keep them safe.

Children's home care plans are thorough and contain essential information about the needs of the children. There is detailed information in their records to help staff understand most children's medical conditions and the medication they take. This helps staff to understand the unique complexities of each child's needs.

Staff monitor the use of medication in the home, and records contain details which give staff vital information to help the children stay well. The manager and staff understand the risks related to the children's health conditions and medicines. Staff immediately seek professional advice if there is anything they are unsure of. This is a protective factor when dealing with children's health and well-being.

Children are closely supervised and do not go missing from the home. Managers have plans in place in case this ever happens, and these are reviewed regularly. If a child were to go missing, staff have plans in place to support them to be found quickly and returned to the home appropriately.

Staff record any health concerns for children and evaluate them. However, on one occasion, a health need for one child was not escalated to managers or other professionals. The child was noted to be in discomfort on several occasions over a six month period, and relevant people were not made aware of this. The opportunity for health and social care professionals to respond to a health need was missed as they were not aware of all issues.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is experienced and knowledgeable. She has been overseeing the management arrangements of another of the provider's homes and is heavily involved in the development of a new-build children's home. This has overstretched the manager and adversely affected the leadership and management of this home.

The manager follows safer recruitment processes when recruiting staff to the home. These processes are followed for agency staff, too, when they work in the home. All staff receive an induction to the home and information they need to be able to work with the children. This reduces the risk of unsuitable staff working with the children.

The staff team is stable, experienced and resilient. Staff say that they feel supported by leaders and managers and have regular supervision and feedback about their practice. Staff are afforded the time and space to reflect on all aspects of their role.

Records show that actions are identified from discussions and that training needs are recognised.

The manager collaborates closely with external providers. Those spoken to speak highly of the manager and team, and their care for children. The manager challenged professionals regarding their lack of response when reviewing the risks in the local area and needing their input. One social worker had not been made aware of an ongoing concern for a child, which has prevented them from exploring the causes and supporting the child's needs.

The manager has systems to oversee the home and completes regular reports about the home's effectiveness. The manager has not recognised that physical intervention records do not capture the reflections of children and staff. No consideration is given to the relationship between staff and children going forward after an incident. There is no reflective overview of the effectiveness of staff's responses. This does not provide staff or children with an opportunity to consider ways in which future incidents might be avoided and how relationships can be mended.

Oversight of children's records by managers is not consistent. Pictorial records completed by staff are not regularly reviewed by the manager. This led to a missed opportunity to escalate a concern to relevant professionals who could investigate this and help the child and their family.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))	12 April 2024
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	12 April 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure they review the use of control, discipline and physical intervention to identify effective practice and respond promptly if concerns emerge. It should incorporate the views of the child and staff involved. The most appropriate methods of capturing children's views should be considered for children who do not use many words to speak. In some cases, children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than five days after the incident.

('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', pages 49 and 50, paragraphs 9.59 and 9.60)

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: SC033152

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Provider name: North Lincolnshire Council

Registered provider address: Church Square House, 30-40 High Street,
Scunthorpe DN15 6NL

Responsible individual: Roxanne Kirby

Registered manager: Johanna Haynes

Inspectors

Carol Jagger, Social Care Inspector (lead)
Rachel Fairhurst, His Majesty's Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024