

SC033326

Kirklees Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a local authority. It provides care for children with social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2013.

Inspection date: 22 February 2022

This monitoring visit

Ofsted judged this home as requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection in September 2021. In January 2022, Ofsted judged that the home had declined in effectiveness.

Following the interim inspection, three compliance notices were raised due to serious concerns about the quality of care, protection of children and leadership and management in the home. A fourth compliance notice was raised regarding the registered manager's failure to provide Ofsted with sufficient information to monitor the serious events involving children living in the home. Ofsted imposed an emergency variation which reduced the condition of registration from four to three children.

This visit considered whether the provider has complied with the variation of registration and how the provider has addressed the identified shortfalls.

The provider has complied with the reduction in the condition of registration from four to three children. There are currently two children living in this home. Staff continue to support one child who previously lived in this home and who now lives with a family member. Another child moved to a new children's home after a planned transition. The two children who remain living in this home present as more settled now than at the interim inspection. There have been no serious incidents between these two children.

Senior leaders provide improved oversight of the running of this home. They have sufficiently addressed the shortfalls identified to meet the four compliance notices.

Leaders have ensured that the damage to the house has been repaired and redecorated. The house is now welcoming, comfortable and safe for the children living in this home. Staff support children to invest in the house. They help to unpack new furnishings and their views contribute to colour schemes around the home. Since the interim inspection, when there has been an incident, children have not damaged the home. This shows that children have increased investment in the home.

Staff report that they feel better supported by leaders, who they describe as approachable and visible. Leaders have booked training for all staff in trauma-informed practice and record writing. A clinical psychologist now provides consultation to staff on a more frequent basis. Staff say that their confidence in caring for children has increased. Staff now use more nurturing approaches in their care, which children are responding well to. This improved engagement by staff helps them to de-escalate situations with children more effectively.

Children engage in more positive activities together, such as quad biking. This has improved relationships between the two children. Staff also recognise children's individual circumstances and needs. They have improved daily routines and opportunities for children. Staff took one child to the skate park despite an incident earlier that day. This provided the child with physical exercise as well as time to reflect and repair relationships with staff.

Children are making progress since the interim inspection. There have been no missing-from-care incidents. Staff have successfully encouraged a child who went into the community to return home quickly and safely. Staff support children to re-engage with education. They liaise with appropriate professionals, such as a careers officer who is now helping one child to return to college.

On one occasion, staff did not successfully intervene to prevent one child being hurt during an altercation. Senior leaders subsequently made decisions about where the children should live. This has improved dynamics within the home and reduced risks for children. There have been no further concerns about children experiencing sexual or emotional harm from other children living in the home since the interim inspection.

Staff use their improved relationships with children to reinforce their appropriate behaviour. Children are responding well to recently introduced incentives and targets. However, staff do not always provide children with opportunities to reflect on incidents. Children are therefore not learning the necessary skills to regulate their behaviour. As a result, when conflicts arise, children continue to display challenging behaviour in the home.

Senior leaders have maintained staffing levels despite the reduction in occupancy at the home. Managers provide clear expectations about the level of supervision required for children. However, the inspector found that staff still do not consistently and effectively supervise children. For example, one child entered another child's bedroom and took his computer console and placed cannabis in a drawer in the child's bedroom. This placed the child at risk of harm from substance misuse.

Staff failed to prevent a child from entering the staff office by force. On entering the office, the child was able to access a screwdriver and a kitchen knife sharpener. This placed the child and others at risk.

Children have updated risk assessments and behaviour management plans which reflect the current risks for children. However, leaders have not provided clear practical guidance for staff within the risk assessments to manage children's behaviour. Staff are therefore not applying consistent practice to manage how they keep keys safe to prevent children from entering the office.

Leaders have not ensured that all staff understand new guidance and alternative care practice. For example, some staff have continued to wear keys on lanyards around their necks despite an email to all staff requesting that this practice stops.

Leaders notify Ofsted of all serious incidents and update the regulatory inspection manager with how they are addressing the home's improvement plan. This enables the inspector to monitor progress and assess whether staff are keeping children safe effectively.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
13/11/2019	Full	Good
10/05/2018	Full	Good

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)) This is in relation to ensuring that staff undertake work with children to develop their social awareness and skills to resolve conflicts positively.	31 March 2022
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—	31 March 2022

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; 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)(v)) This is in relation to ensuring that leaders provide staff with sufficient practical guidance in risk assessments to keep children safe from potential harm to themselves or others. It also relates to ensuring that staff consistently supervise children.	
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 staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)) This is in relation to leaders ensuring that consistent staff practice improves the experiences of care children living in the home receive.	31 March 2022

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children’s home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC033326

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Registered provider address: Kirklees Metropolitan Council, Civic Centre 3,
Huddersfield, Yorkshire HD1 2EY

Responsible individual: Elaine McShane

Registered manager: Martin Steele

Inspector

Joanna Warburton, Social Care Inspector

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