

SC033326

Registered provider: Kirklees Metropolitan Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a local authority. It provides care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

There were three children living at the home at the time of the inspection.

There has been no registered manager in the home since 9 August 2023. The deputy manager is in charge of the day-to-day running of the home.

Inspection dates: 24 and 25 October 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected and their welfare is not safeguarded. Ofsted considered restricting this service however, the responsible individual reassured Ofsted that there will be no children admitted to the home during the period of compliance.

Date of last inspection: 3 July 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

The children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 3 and 4 July 2023. Serious and widespread failings were identified that meant children were at risk of harm. Ofsted issued two compliance notices under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 25, fire precautions.

On 23 August 2023, the children's home had a monitoring visit. The inspectors concluded from this visit that progress had been made in relation to the two compliance notices, which were deemed to be met overall. None of the requirements raised at the full inspection were reviewed during this monitoring visit. A new requirement was raised under regulation 12 to reflect steps of the compliance notice that had not been fully met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/07/2023	Full	Inadequate
30/08/2022	Full	Good
06/01/2022	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
13/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Serious shortfalls were identified in the help and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. These shortfalls have negatively affected the overall outcomes and experiences of children living in the home.

The quality of care for some children is poor. Staff do not always carry out one-to-one sessions with children about their health and lifestyle choices. Some children's diets are poor, and some have irregular sleep patterns. Staff do not consistently help children to understand the wider and long-lasting implications of not looking after their physical health.

Staff failed to provide appropriate health support to a child when they were vulnerable. The staff did not consider the child's mental well-being and followed the child's wishes for the staff to leave. When the staff left, the child went missing despite being distressed and in need of support. The child was missing and at risk of harm for several hours before returning to the home.

Children's engagement in education continues to be poor. Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that one child has the right plans in place ready for them to start college in September. This means that the child is still not in any form of education. The efforts from staff to get children back into education have been ineffective. This does not give children a clear message that education is important. This hinders their academic and social development and may affect their chances for career opportunities later in their life.

Children enjoy a range of leisure activities, such as walking, day trips out and playing games in the home. These activities help the children to develop their self-esteem.

Despite the shortfalls, children said that they like the staff and have good relationships with them. Staff encourage children to maintain important relationships when safe to do so. The children all say that they want to remain living in the home until they reach independence.

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

Staff do not routinely follow missing-from-home plans and risk assessments when children are missing. One child was missing overnight following a serious incident. Staff made no attempts to locate or contact the child for over seven hours. This is a significant failure to safeguard children. When children return home, they are not provided with an independent return home interview. This is a missed opportunity to explore whether children come to any harm when missing, and if there is anything staff can do to safeguard children in future.

Some of the children's risk assessments are not up to date. These plans do not include all known risks which affect children's safety and welfare. This prevents staff from responding to children's risks efficiently and consistently. Inconsistent approaches by staff are confusing for children as they receive mixed messages about how best to keep safe.

Children's behaviour is not managed effectively. Consequences used by staff are not always proportionate and are ineffective in addressing children's unwanted behaviours. The lack of a restorative approach means that children do not learn the impact some behaviours have on others. Therefore, children do not learn safe and appropriate alternative strategies to avoid similar incidents occurring again in the future.

There has been one physical intervention since the last inspection. Staff took necessary actions and supported the child appropriately. Both staff and the child were given the opportunity to discuss what happened following the hold to see what could have been done differently to avoid a reoccurrence.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Leaders and managers do not have sufficient oversight of the quality of care provided and do not monitor the home effectively. They do not use the available internal auditing tools to identify and monitor shortfalls in the home. This means that some records and documents are not up to date and do not provide accurate information about the home and the children who live in the home. This means that staff are working with out-of-date information, which hinders staff's understanding and ability to provide quality care to children.

The home is run by an acting manager. Staff said that the acting manager is supportive and works hard to meet the children's needs.

The acting manager has not received an appropriate level of support from senior managers since the last full inspection in July 2023. No action plan was agreed and implemented following this inspection to address the shortfalls that were found. This means that little progress has been made since then and all requirements from the last full inspection have been restated.

Leaders and managers have not supported the acting manager to submit appropriate safeguarding incidents to Ofsted. When decisions have been made to not submit such notifications to the regulator, the rationale for these has not been captured. This hinders the regulator's oversight of how leaders and managers respond to safeguarding matters.

Supervision records between the acting manager and staff reflect staff practice and support the staff in their roles. However, records of the supervisions that the acting manager receives to support her in her role could not be provided. Therefore, the

quality of any discussions about the acting manager's role and how beneficial they are could not be assessed.

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; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(vi))	1 December 2023
* 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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;	1 December 2023

use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(h))	
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans; support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(x))	1 December 2023
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— understand the child’s health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child’s health and	1 December 2023

well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iii)(v))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	1 December 2023
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	1 December 2023
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a)) In particular, leaders and managers should ensure that there is a registered manager in post who is in day-to-day charge of the home.	1 December 2023

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children to understand and, where necessary, work to change, key areas of health and well-being, such as, but not limited to, nutrition and a healthy diet. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered person should ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them, and the wider community. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

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: SC033326

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kirklees Metropolitan Council

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

Responsible individual: Tom Brailsford

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector
Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

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