

SC033387

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides short-break stays for up to 8 children with physical disabilities, sensory impairments and learning disabilities.

At the time of the inspection, 3 children were accessing the home under short-break arrangements.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 January 2026

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	requires improvement to be 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: 25 September 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/09/2024	Full	Good
17/05/2023	Full	Good
22/02/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
18/10/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff prioritise effective communication with children so they understand them well and can meet their needs. Staff tailor their communication to each child's unique needs. They introduce creative methods, such as light-up buttons linked to emotions, to help children express how they feel. Staff use accessible books to explain autism, attention deficit hyperactivity disorder and other conditions, which helps children understand themselves and others. Staff consistently use respectful, child-centred language in daily practice and in the children's records.

Staff are confident in managing children's emotional needs. They have a keen focus on supporting children to build independence skills where appropriate. This includes helping children to be in control of their own personal care and manage their emotions.

Staff understand children's individual dietary needs and provide food safely, including for children with a gastrostomy feed. Children are provided with a broad, healthy and nutritious diet of foods they enjoy. This has helped one child improve their intake and gain a healthy amount of weight.

Staff continue to improve the environment. One corridor is designed with minimal features to support children who may feel distressed. Families said this meets their children's needs well. Staff take pride in personalising and maintaining the home to reduce a clinical feel and create a more homely experience for children.

Staff plan activities around children's interests effectively. Staff make everyday activities engaging, such as creating reading sacks with props and visual aids, which increases children's enjoyment of books. Staff celebrate children's cultural identities. However, activities in the community are limited and often involve short trips, such as visiting shops or getting food. This reduces children's experiences outside the home in their local neighbourhood.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff have not consistently reviewed mechanical and medicinal restrictive measures in the setting. For one child, staff were not professionally curious about the parental wish for the child to sleep in a bed that the child cannot independently get out of. The child used this bed without having an assessed need for such a restrictive measure to be in place. For another child, staff gave 'as and when required' medication to reduce distress without demonstrating that all positive behaviour strategies had been tried first.

Environmental risks are not always fully identified or managed. There is no routine check on the use of window restrictors and whether these are appropriate. On one occasion, a child exited via a window, as a window restrictor was not in place. Staff follow individual

risk assessments, but further work is needed to proactively reduce risks in the setting. However, risk assessments are mostly contemporaneous and in a coherent format for staff to identify and act on risks.

When incidents happen, staff and managers reflect on the reasons. They update risk assessments and care plans to prevent repetition. Staff maintain a learning culture rather than blame individuals.

Children feel safe and have trusting relationships with staff. Staff understand safeguarding procedures and escalate concerns appropriately. Staff share appropriate information with relevant professionals to keep children safer.

Staff review boundaries with children and explain why limits are in place. Staff work with parents to manage children's screen time and review these limits regularly. This helps children understand expectations and manage their own emotions effectively.

Children and families know how to make complaints. Staff take any issues seriously, and full investigations take place. Staff handle any issues according to policy, inform families of outcomes, and work to maintain or improve relationships.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home benefits from an experienced manager who works collaboratively with children, staff, families and professionals. They understand the service's strengths and limitations and plan to address areas for development. The manager has plans to streamline the process of children being able to use the services offered at the home.

The manager attends regular local authority resource meetings to consider children's needs against available resources. While this limits some choice over children who spend time at the home, it supports coordinated planning across the wider system. The manager aims to make the process for children starting to use the service quicker and smoother.

Managers and staff work collaboratively, making service development a shared priority. Away days are arranged that reinforce the local authority's values and help staff apply them in practice. Quality standards and development plans are discussed openly in team meetings. Staff adopt roles in line with their skills to improve experiences for children, such as creating activities and making the environment better.

Leaders and managers support staff progression. Staff feel supported to develop, including undertaking professional qualifications and progressing to senior roles. Staff receive mandatory and additional training tailored to children's needs, and the manager aims to continue this development and embed this learning in daily practice.

The staff actively encourage feedback from professionals and families. The manager has sought feedback electronically and achieved a 100% response rate. The manager has

introduced social mornings at the home for further opportunities to garner feedback. Feedback has been positive and informs service improvements.

Notifiable events have not always been reported to the regulator in line with statutory duty. The manager addressed this promptly and was open about the oversight. The manager is transparent and addresses any issues promptly.

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
Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20 (2)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are assessed to sleep in beds appropriate for their individual needs. In addition, the registered person must ensure that staff only use 'as and when required' medications, prescribed for the short-term treatment of anxiety, in accordance with prescription and bespoke protocol.	12 February 2026
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—	12 February 2026

has spoken to the user about the measure; and

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and

within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure.

(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v)(vii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that a record is kept when required medications are administered for anything, including the short-term treatment of anxiety.

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff build relationships with those involved in the children's care where appropriate. In particular, the registered person should offer transportation for children so that the short-break offer is broader and more accessible for families that require this level of support. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff assess what would be safe, achievable and reasonable for each child in line with their relevant plans. In addition, the registered person should ensure that appropriate opportunities are available for each child to have fun, form friendships and enjoy life, relative to their stage of development and individual needs. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.10)
- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and consider the arrangements in place to protect them. This specifically relates to ensuring that the environment is proactively reviewed to ensure that effective measures are in place to keep children safer. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- The registered person should ensure that they notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: SC033387

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Civic 3, Market Street, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire
HD1 2EY

Responsible individual: Joel Hanna

Registered manager: Stacey Mazacs

Inspector

Vikki Thwaites, Social Care Inspector

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