

SC035220

Durham County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. The home provides care for up to three children with social and emotional difficulties.

There was one child living in the home at the time of the visit.

The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2022.

Inspection date: 30 May 2022

This monitoring visit

At the last full inspection on 12 and 13 April 2022, this children's home was judged inadequate.

This monitoring visit took place to determine whether the provider had met the requirements raised at the last inspection, and to ensure that the outcomes for children have improved.

This visit included a review of the children's documents, and discussion with the child currently living in the home, the registered manager, staff and other relevant professionals.

Since the last full inspection, and following a review of one child's care plan, that child has now been supported to move on from the home in a planned way. As a result, the home is settling. This means that the child who remains in the home is making some progress as they are now provided with a stable environment.

There has been a massive reduction in the need for agency staff due to the changes in the home. When the need does arise, the registered manager uses the two staff known to the child. This has improved their continuity of care.

The staff follow clear guidance that sets out the actions that they must take to check the identity of any visitors to the home. This includes agency staff when required. This promotes the child's safety.

There is now an in-depth induction process for agency staff to complete before they work in the home. This ensures that they are fully familiar with the home's policies and procedures, and the child's records. The induction process is signed off by a senior member of the team. This process ensures that the child's welfare and safety are promoted as the agency staff are now fully aware of their day-to-day responsibilities.

The registered manager now ensures that Ofsted, as well as all other relevant agencies, is notified of any serious incidents. This enables Ofsted to evaluate and monitor the safeguarding arrangements for the child. This supports the safe care and well-being of the child.

The registered manager now receives supervision from their senior manager, in line with the commitments identified in the home's statement of purpose. This process enables the manager to reflect on, and monitor, the quality of care provided to the child.

The registered manager has reviewed the missing-from-home documentation. These documents now clearly record any evaluations drawn, and management comments. This supports good monitoring.

Children are supported in their education and health. Staff advocate on their behalf, and engage with education and health professionals to improve outcomes for the children. When children do not attend education, staff ensure that home-schooling is undertaken. This supports children to maintain routines with clear boundaries. Children are provided with educational resources from schools, and individual interests are promoted by the staff. This supports and encourages learning.

Two of the requirements raised at the last inspection have been carried forward. As no children have moved into the home since the last inspection, the provider has been unable to demonstrate how their processes for admitting children into the home have improved. In addition, there is no system in place for the manager to satisfy themselves that the employment of agency staff in the home has been done safely.

A further requirement has been issued as not all staff are provided with supervision, or a copy of the final record of their supervision. This does not support staff development or the evaluation of staff practice to meet the needs of the children.

This monitoring visit did not provide enough evidence to secure an improved inspection judgement; therefore, a further full inspection will be undertaken.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/04/2022	Full	Inadequate
11/05/2021	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Good
16/10/2018	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 care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out on the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a) (2)(a)) The registered provider must ensure that, when they complete an impact risk assessment for a child that moves into the home, the risk assessment suitably evaluates and considers all the child's known risks and emerging needs and evaluates how these may affect the children already living in the home.	30 June 2022
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character;	30 June 2022

the individual has the appropriate experience, qualifications and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purpose of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (2)(b) (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) This relates specifically to the manager having a system in place that enables her to have direct oversight and full evaluation of employment checks undertaken.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) This refers specifically to the staff receiving regular formal supervision and receiving a signed and dated copy of the record of the supervision.	30 June 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: SC035220

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Durham County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Durham DH1 5UJ

Responsible individual: Laura Counce

Registered manager: Emma Atkinson

Inspector

Michael Dack, Social Care Inspector

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