

SC035222

Registered provider: Stockton Borough Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to 3 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The post for a registered manager is currently vacant, and an interim manager has been appointed. They have not yet applied to register with Ofsted.

At the time of this visit, one child was living in the home. The inspector spoke with the child during the visit.

Inspection date: 11 June 2026

This monitoring visit

During an assurance inspection on 25 February 2026, Ofsted identified serious and widespread concerns. Failures in safeguarding practice and the leadership and management of the home were negatively affecting children's safety and protection. In response, Ofsted issued a compliance notice under Regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard).

On 22 April 2026, Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit to review the compliance notice under Regulation 13. The visit identified that not all the steps in the compliance notice had been met. The unmet steps were restated.

Following the serious and widespread concerns identified, the provider gave written assurances to Ofsted that no children would move into the home. The provider has honoured this, with no children moving into the home since this inspection took place.

This visit was carried out to review the provider's progress in meeting the steps outlined in the compliance notice.

Leaders and managers have implemented systems to strengthen management oversight and staff accountability. This includes increased oversight of incidents and children's records by the responsible individual. This helps leaders to identify shortfalls in practice and implement learning for staff.

Staff have made and maintained improvements to the home environment. The home is decorated and maintained to a good standard. This helps children to feel a sense of belonging.

Since the last inspection, leaders and managers have been proactive in improving support for staff. Team meetings are used effectively to help staff learn from shortfalls. The staff receive regular supervision sessions that challenge practice where required. However, some supervision sessions continue to lack reflection, which is a missed opportunity to support staff development.

Leaders and managers have started to implement training for staff to address the shortfalls in practice. Since the last inspection, staff have received additional safeguarding and professional curiosity training. However, this is not yet embedded, and opportunities to explore risks of exploitation for the child continue to be missed.

Staff do not always support the child to understand risks in a way that is appropriate for them. Discussions staff have with the child do not take into account the child's cognitive ability. This prevents the child from having opportunities to fully understand risks and reduce their vulnerabilities.

The provider has taken steps to address the steps outlined in the compliance notice. However, due to the changes being in the early stages and learning not yet embedded, the requirements raised under Regulation 13 have been restated.

The requirements and recommendations raised at the assurance inspection were not reviewed during this visit and are therefore restated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/10/2024	Full	Good
06/09/2023	Full	Good
05/07/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be 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, 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
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; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(c)(e)(f)(g)(ii)(h))	16 July 2026
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—	16 July 2026

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; help each child to understand how to keep safe; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; and take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and that the effectiveness of the home’s child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(vi)(e))	
The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— develop the child’s interests and hobbies; participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child’s interests and preferences; and that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child’s interests and hobbies. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(b))	16 July 2026
The children’s views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children’s care and welfare and their lives.	16 July 2026

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—

ensure that staff—

help each child to understand how the child’s views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child.

(Regulation 7 (1)(c) (2)(a)(iii))

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff work closely with placing authorities to ensure that children who do not participate in education are supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, children should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and to engage in suitable structured activities. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to help children understand, and, where necessary, work to change behaviours in key areas of health and wellbeing, such as mental health, relationships, sexual health, and the use of drugs and vapes. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective recording, with handwritten notes being clear and legible. In particular, staff should record information about individual children in a non-stigmatising way, using language that is kind and caring. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: SC035222

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stockton Borough Council

Registered provider address: Dunedin House, Columbia Drive, Thornaby,
Stockton-on-Tees TS17 6BJ

Responsible individual: Debra Farrow

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Natalie Clark, Social Care Inspector

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