

SC035235

Durham County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and manages this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and/or young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2008. She has been absent from her post since 26 September 2020.

Inspection date: 20 January 2021

This monitoring visit

Ofsted conducted a monitoring visit on 25 November 2020. Following that visit, serious concerns were found, but these were not widespread. The visit resulted in two compliance notices being issued under regulation 13 and regulation 40. Following the monitoring visit on 20 January 2021, Ofsted considers the provider to have met the steps in the two compliance notices.

The provider has developed monitoring systems to ensure that children and young people receive care and support, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. This has included a review of children's and young people's care plans to ensure that they are relevant and track progress. Children and young people receive better care and protection as a result.

The provider has sourced a wide range of training and learning opportunities for staff. This includes understanding regulation 40 and learning about the role of the designated officer in the local authority, as well as other training that is relevant to the needs of children and young people in their care. Additionally, the acting manager has asked that all staff review policies and procedures around bullying and other areas of practice. This supports the learning and development of staff, which improves the quality of care that children and young people receive.

Key-work sessions with children and young people have covered topics such as the complaint procedure. This has been effective, as there has been only one complaint made by children and young people since the last monitoring visit. Records detail the

manager's review and actions in response to the complaint received. Debriefs take place with children and young people when they have made complaints. This provides children and young people with positive messages that they will be listened to and that staff will take their complaints seriously.

The provider has notified Ofsted of incidents considered serious under regulation 40. This means that as a regulator, Ofsted has had an opportunity to review the actions taken by the provider, so as to ensure that children and young people are increasingly protected from harm.

Children's and young people's freedom and access to areas of their home have been restricted. There was an isolated incident where staff locked an internal door, limiting the children's and young people's access. This deprived children and young people of their liberty, thus compromising their safety and welfare. The manager has reviewed the incident and has given clear instructions to her staff team not to repeat the incident.

A requirement made at the last visit under regulation 12, relating to admissions, was not reviewed because there have been no admissions since the last visit. This will be reviewed at the next inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2019	Full	Good
24/07/2018	Full	Good
06/06/2017	Full	Good
14/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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, and 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
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; 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; manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that the manager considers impact risk assessments for each child and young person prior to any admission.	20 February 2021
The registered person must ensure that—	20 February 2021

the privacy of children is appropriately protected;

children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and

any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—

is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;

is necessary and proportionate;

is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and

allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21)

In particular, ensure that children have full access to their home other than for health and safety reasons.

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: SC035235

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Durham County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

Responsible individual: Claire Morris

Registered manager: Bernadette Olney

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit

www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2021