

SC035247

Registered provider: Durham County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short-breaks children's home is operated by a local authority and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children or young people who have learning disabilities. The manager was registered on 2 May 2017.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and/or the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 25 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2017	Full	Good
20/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/05/2016	Full	Good
02/02/2016	Interim	Sustained 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, 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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (2)(b)) In particular, ensure that risk assessments are individualised and that they reflect areas of risk and include strategies to mitigate risk of harm to safeguard children and young people.	15/06/2018
*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. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d) and (e)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that the staff receive training relevant to meet the needs of the young people they care for.	15/06/2018

Additionally, the registered manager should ensure that there are robust monitoring systems in place to ensure that safeguarding protocols are implemented and followed.	
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children’s home’s overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children’s needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. Ensure that any care that is arranged or provided for a child that— relates to the child’s development (within the meaning of section 17(11) of the Children Act 1989) or health; and is not arranged or provided as part of the health service continued under section 1(1) of the National Health Service Act 2006(a), satisfies the conditions in paragraph (3). The conditions are— that the care is approved, and kept under review throughout its duration, by the placing authority; that the care meets the child’s needs; that the care is delivered by a person who— has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care; and is under the supervision of a person who is appropriately skilled and qualified to supervise that care. (Regulation 6 (2)(d)(i)(ii) and (3)(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, ensure that risk assessments are kept under review and amended following any significant events.	15/06/2018

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

The children and young people accessing this provision enjoy spending time in the home. For planned stays, consideration is given to the preference and choice of parents, carers, children and the young people. Consultation with families and stakeholders improves the experience for those accessing this provision.

The staff and the team manager build positive relationships with the children and young people they care for. Additionally, there are good relationships with parents and carers, as well as a range of professionals. The home has received a number of compliments from parents and professionals. Comments include gratitude for the kind nature of the staff and their input into the children's and young people's care.

Star charts are used to celebrate the achievements and progress of the children and young people, who collect tokens to access a reward of their choice. There is a system in place to record the progress of the children and young people from their starting points.

Activities are planned and in consultation with the children and young people. The activities are risk assessed to ensure that there is sufficient staffing levels to meet the range of each child's and young person's needs in a community setting.

The health needs of the children and young people are well understood and responded to effectively. There is a good system in place to ensure that the administration of medication is in line with the child's or young person's prescription.

Improvements are required to update each child's and young person's risk assessment and placement plan. In particular, following all significant events or changes to care needs, risk assessments and care plans should be reviewed and updated to ensure that the care provided remains relevant to each child and young person.

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

There are a number of issues relating to safeguarding practice in this home. Safeguarding practice is ineffective. This has resulted in the home's overall judgement of inadequate.

Risk assessments are not effective and do not reflect the level of risks to some of the children and young people. This means there are shortfalls in identifying strategies to mitigate risk of harm. This is likely to increase the vulnerability of the children and young people accessing this provision.

Unsatisfactory recording systems do not demonstrate how safeguarding protocols are being followed. The lack of evaluation in recordings makes it difficult to understand decision-making responses to safeguarding issues. Inconsistencies to the reporting of concerns mean that safeguarding practice is unsafe. For example, one young person was admitted to the home with similar bruising on two occasions. Only one of the incident was reported.

The registered manager has made recent improvements to supervision agendas.

Safeguarding has been added as a standalone agenda item. This has not yet had the desired impact. For example, when a safeguarding issue was highlighted during a supervision session, there was an inadequate response to ensure that the child's risk assessment was updated. Additionally, there are poor recordings to demonstrate how safeguarding concerns are monitored and reviewed by the registered manager.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The registered manager reported that she has completed the level 5 diploma in management, but is waiting for her certificate. She has completed the course well within timescales.

The quality and effectiveness of documents being used are poor. This includes the use of body maps, including how unexplained injuries are enquired about and then documented. This was a shortfall raised at the previous full inspection and a requirement was made. The manager has not fully met the requirement.

Because of the systems in place, the staff team, including the registered manager, are not identifying and making links to potential safeguarding concerns. The registered manager does not have an effective system for her own monitoring and oversight to ensure that there is positive and proactive planning around decision-making. This will enhance safeguarding practice and improve outcomes for the children and young people.

The staff team is well established. There is one new member of staff who is due to start relevant training for the role. All staff have completed mandatory training. The staff have not received additional safeguarding training relevant to children and young people who have learning disabilities who access the short-breaks service. Additionally, training around risk assessments has not been completed. This would assist staff to better understand how to link strategies to risks in order to manage those risks more effectively.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC035247

Provision sub-type: Local authority children's home

Registered Provider: Durham County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Durham DH1 5UL

Responsible individual: Karen Robb

Registered manager: Kathryn Bulman

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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