

SC035387

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children and/or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2020. She has been away from the home since September 2020. An interim manager is in day-to-day charge of the home.

Inspection date: 26 January 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place to review safeguarding practice and how well leaders and managers safely manage the home. Ofsted last visited this children's home on 4 February 2020, when it carried out a full inspection. This monitoring visit comprised both on-site and off-site inspection activity.

Since October 2020, there has been an increase in serious safeguarding notifications concerning the children living in the home. These incidents included significant damage to the home, violence and aggression towards staff, the use of illegal substances and frequent periods of children going missing from the home. Despite these significant concerns, leaders and managers admitted a vulnerable younger child to the home. This placed the younger child at risk of harm.

Leaders and managers failed to ensure that the risk management strategies in place to safeguard and protect the younger child were implemented. These strategies included increased staffing levels to ensure that staff always supervised the younger child. As a result, the children were able to cause damage to the home and went missing from the home together. This placed all of the children at risk of harm.

Children do not consistently receive the support that they need. Leaders and managers do not make sure that there are adequate numbers of staff on each shift

to respond to children's behaviours and to keep children safe. As a result, staff have requested police assistance to manage children's behaviours. This increases the risk of children being criminalised.

The registered manager has been absent from the home since September 2020. Since this time, leadership and management arrangements have been inconsistent and ineffective. This is because the registered provider did not quickly arrange suitable management oversight of the home in the absence of the registered manager. As a result, staff were left unsupported and this impacted on the quality of care for children.

The registered provider appointed an interim manager in November 2020. However, the interim manager has been required to spend periods of time working from home. This means that there has been an absence of on-site supervision and support for the staff, and a lack of effective oversight of the day-to-day management of the home. As a result, children do not receive consistent care and support that meets their needs. This is detrimental to their safety, development and progress.

The registered provider does not yet know when the registered manager will return to the home. The interim manager has yet to apply to register with Ofsted. The lack of stable and effective management means that children's day-to-day experiences are poor.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2020	Full	Good
26/11/2018	Full	Good
30/05/2017	Full	Good
31/08/2016	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 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; 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 concern about a child's welfare; and 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 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iv)(v)(vi)(b))	28 February 2021
*The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	28 February 2021

lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home statement of purpose; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(b) (2)(a)(d)(e)(f))	
The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the children's home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that they consider how the known risks of the children already living in the home may impact on the safety and well-being of any child admitted to the home.	28 February 2021
Any person who carries on or manages an establishment or agency of any description without being registered under this Part in respect of it (as an establishment or, as the case may be, agency of that description) shall be guilty of an offence. (Section 11 (1) Care Standards Act 2000) In particular, the registered person must ensure that the person in day-to-day charge of the home registers with Ofsted.	28 February 2021

*These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: SC035387

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council

Registered provider address: Municipal Buildings, Church Road, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS18 1LD

Responsible individual: Rhona Bollands

Registered manager: Lisa Freeman

Inspector

Debbie White, Social Care Inspector

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