

SC035499

Registered provider: East Riding of Yorkshire Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and runs this home. The home provides medium- to long-term residential care for up to six children. At the time of the inspection, two children were living at the home, and one child had just moved out.

There is currently no registered manager. A new manager has been recruited but has not yet registered with Ofsted.

We last visited this setting on 29 June 2022 to carry out a monitoring visit.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 July 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 3 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: on 3 May 2022, a full inspection identified significant and widespread failings in the leadership and management arrangements at the home. This impacted on the safety, protection and well-being of children. As a result of the identified shortfalls, a decision was made to issue five compliance notices and four requirements.

The compliance notices related to: regulation 12, the protection of children standard; regulation 13, the leadership and management standard; regulation 14, the care planning standard; regulation 35, behaviour management policies and records; and regulation 40, notification of a serious event.

A notice to restrict accommodation at the home was also issued on 11 May 2022, running until 3 August 2022 inclusively.

On 14 June 2022, a monitoring visit took place to review progress in addressing the identified shortfalls. Ofsted found that improvements had been made to address three of the five compliance notices. However, there were still shortfalls in respect of behaviour management policies and records, and notification of serious events were still not being sent to Ofsted in a timely way. Compliance notices were reissued again for regulations 35 and 40.

On 29 June 2022, another monitoring visit took place to further review progress. No further progress had been made in meeting the remaining two compliance notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/05/2022	Full	Inadequate
25/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
19/10/2021	Full	Inadequate
19/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

At this full inspection, serious and widespread concerns were identified. Staff are not keeping children safe. Managers do not provide good leadership and staff are not meeting the children's needs. The children currently living in the home have complex needs and their behaviours negatively affect one another. Staff have been unable to manage the dynamics between children. This has resulted in an increase in children assaulting each other.

Both children live at the home with court-directed restrictions in place. The restrictions are intended to keep the children safe and include preventing the children, at certain times, from leaving the home. The home has several exits, which mean staff are not always successful in preventing children from leaving the home when they need to.

The condition of one child's bedroom is unacceptable. There is an exposed wall where plaster has been picked off. There is widespread graffiti and damage to the other walls. Children's belongings are not stored properly in the furniture provided. This makes it difficult for staff to identify and remove items that a child could use to self-harm. Children repeatedly acquire items to cause themselves injury, which does not give the message to children that they are cared for.

One child attends an alternative education provision on a part-time basis. The other child is not in any form of education or learning. Instead, staff offer games and activities to support the child's learning. This is not underpinned by appropriate expertise or knowledge. This does not support the child to make progress or have their educational needs met.

Poor care planning means that children do not always have a good experience of moving in to, or out of the home. Children's views, wishes and feelings are not considered, and the views and opinions of all relevant people connected to the children are not sought.

Children are not always supported to spend time with people who are important to them, such as their families and friends, despite this being part of their care plan. This impacts on the children's emotional well-being.

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

Children leave the premises and go missing despite increased levels of staffing. Even if children go missing for a short period of time, they are at significant risk in the community due to their vulnerabilities. One child has returned to the home with money given to them by an adult, as well as alcohol and other items of concern.

Staff follow plans to search for, report and return children back to the home. On one occasion, staff did not intervene to prevent a child leaving, despite the child having packed bags and carrying bedding. This child had had a number of missing incidents, during which it was suspected that they were in contact with adults who pose a risk. This information was shared with the multi-agency group. The manager was unhappy with the response following the sharing of this information. However, the manager did not challenge the multi-agency group's response, which left the child vulnerable to exploitation.

Staff are unable to manage children's challenging behaviours, which at times has led to children being restrained. There are serious shortfalls in the record-keeping and quality of conversations and reflections about such events that have occurred with both staff and children. Suitable training for managing children's behaviour positively has been identified for managers but has not yet been delivered.

A number of hazards and building debris remain on the premises that should not be there, despite this being raised as an issue previously. This is a health and safety hazard for children and staff.

Children's needs are regularly reviewed. However, records do not reflect the full extent of children's vulnerabilities. When new concerns emerge, these are not included in children's records promptly. This means that staff work to plans that do not reflect the latest or current risks. This does not guide staff in how to respond in managing risks and meeting the children's needs.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Management arrangements at the home are poor. The staff team does not have the leadership, guidance or structure to assist them in their roles. Management tasks have not been completed effectively, including staff supervisions and team meetings. This also impacts on the care provided for children, as staff are not challenged about shortfalls in their practice.

Progress towards addressing shortfalls in practice identified at previous inspections is slow or not evident. Many weaknesses identified earlier remain unchanged.

Children require high levels of staff to keep them safe. In order to deliver this, the manager has used a high number of different carers, including agency workers. This does not promote consistency and does not create stability for children. Systems introduced to provide confirmation that all staff read and understand children's care plans are not being followed.

The manager has failed to ensure that children are protected in the event of a fire at the home. One child has not participated in a fire drill since they moved in. There is no evidence of how many agency staff working in the home have been involved in fire drills. Weekly fire alarm tests have been missed some weeks. Fire risks are increased by children obtaining items when they leave the home, such as a lighter. This was used to set a fire in the home.

Relationships between some staff and children are good, although there have been a number of assaults on staff. There has also been an increase in significant events generally, including children needing to be restrained a number of times each week, children running away from the home, and children hurting themselves through self-harm. Staff are showing signs of, and report feeling, on high alert and under extreme pressure.

Serious and widespread concerns were raised throughout this full inspection. However, before the end of the inspection, the provider acted immediately to reduce the likelihood of a serious safeguarding incident occurring in the home, and children were safeguarded, with one child moving out of the home. Senior leaders from the local authority offered assurances to the regulator that these actions were long-term and would not be revoked. These assurances prevented Ofsted from taking more stringent enforcement action

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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c)) This refers to escalating concerns when the actions of other agencies may compromise a child's safety.	11 September 2022
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)(i)(ii)) This refers to maintaining the home to a level where children feel that they are valued.	11 September 2022
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—	11 September 2022

develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, and balance these against what they judge to be in the child's best interests when making decisions about the child's care and welfare; help each child to prepare for any review of the child's relevant plans and to make the child's views, wishes and feelings known for the purposes of that review; and ensure that the views of each relevant person are taken into account, so far as reasonably practicable, before making a decision about the care or welfare of a child. (Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(vi)(e)) This refers to ensuring the process of reviews is not disrupted during transitions, and that this forum is used to ascertain children's views before decisions are taken.	
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;	11 September 2022

understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(xi)(xii)(xiii)) This refers to implementing effective strategies to prevent children hurting each other.	
*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— manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; 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; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished, and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(iv)(vi)(b)(d))	11 September 2022
*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— 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’s statement of purpose;	11 September 2022

ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(e))	
*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 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 in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to— ensure the effective induction of each child into the home; manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority; that each child's relevant plans are followed; that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii)(c)(d))	11 September 2022
*The registered person must ensure that— within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and	11 September 2022

has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	11 September 2022

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC035499

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: East Riding of Yorkshire Council, County Hall, Cross Street, Beverley HU17 9BA

Responsible individual: Eoin Rush

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Inspector

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