

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.

The registered manager's post is vacant. The deputy manager is undertaking day-to-day management of the home.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

We last visited this setting on 7 December 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 January 2022

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 19 October 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: Following the full inspection on 19 October 2021 serious concerns were found around children's safety and the leadership of the home; two compliance notices were issued. These were found to be only partly met when the monitoring visit took place on 07 December 2021. Consequently, the two compliance notices were re-issued and were deemed to have been met at the current inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/10/2021	Full	Inadequate
19/11/2019	Full	Good
05/02/2019	Full	Good
23/10/2018	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children receive individualised care that is tailored to their specific needs and vulnerabilities. Some children make progress in all areas of their lives, including education, emotional and social well-being and feeling settled in the home. For some children, this is significant progress, which improves their opportunities later in life.

Leaders and staff enjoy trusted relationships with children, using common interests to forge bonds. This means children have adults around them who they can approach to share any worries and concerns. The children do not always enjoy positive relationships with each other, and there have been incidents of conflict between the children. These are managed well, and further interactions between children are closely monitored to reduce opportunities for repetition.

When children have needs relating to their emotional well-being and mental health, they are supported to engage with specialist services. When children feel unable to engage in this work, staff have the clinical support of a psychologist to advise them on how to care effectively for children in the interim. Due to the success of this, the psychology service is currently being expanded to provide even more guidance to staff.

Children say that they do not always feel listened to. There are mechanisms for consulting with them, but they sometimes do not fully understand why their wishes cannot be met. In response, staff have supported children to join the young people's council, which demonstrates that they recognise the importance of promoting the children's voice. Children also sometimes say they do not feel happy in the home. However, their view of their care fluctuates and depends on wider factors affecting them.

Children personalise their rooms and are encouraged to develop and follow their interests. This helps them to develop a sense of identity and enriches their lives. To try and maximise children's engagement with learning, staff encourage interests that could lead to further study.

Some children move on in a managed way, and staff say this is done at the child's pace with a collaborative plan to build their readiness for independence. However, despite reassurance from staff, children say they do not always feel they are being properly equipped, which creates anxiety for them. To address this, there are options for children to stay beyond their eighteenth birthday when the additional time is needed to prepare them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children's risks are generally well understood and consistently described by staff who apply a detailed knowledge of strategies to mitigate those risks. However, not all of the written risk assessments reflect all known risks. This could prevent a consistent response from staff.

Shortfalls relating to online safety have now been addressed, although some new practices are still to be fully embedded. Managers and staff have worked with children to make safeguarding in this area more robust, and they are aware of the continued need to be vigilant.

There has been a reduction in the number of missing-from-home episodes, which is partly due to children feeling more settled within the home. Similarly, incidents of self-injurious behaviour have reduced as staff are more aware of cues and have clear plans about how and when to intervene. One child has a potentially harmful item in their possession and refuses to relinquish it; staff have not taken effective action to recover this item. This results in an item being in circulation in the home that a child could use to harm themselves.

There have not been any occasions where staff have needed to hold children to keep them safe. Instead, other techniques are used to manage children's behaviour when they become highly emotional and struggle to self-regulate. This results in a positive atmosphere in the home.

Bedroom door alarms are used to safeguard children, and their use is kept under regular and appropriate review. However, the required consents are not in place, which does not provide reassurance that this is done with the agreement of the children's families or social workers.

One child requires regular monthly monitoring of blood pressure to be reassured their health is not at risk. This was delegated to the home's staff to ensure this happened, but due to an oversight, this has not been done for the last five months. This does not promote the child's health and could compromise their well-being.

One child occasionally views images which are illegal for them to see or share with others. This exposes the child to potential harm and would place them at risk of criminalisation if they were to show them to other children. The provider has not responded with sufficient urgency to this situation or taken all the possible steps to address it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The acting manager is held in positive regard by staff and professionals. She has made improvements since the last inspection and monitoring visit. Staff now describe her as present and accessible, and written records show there is better

management oversight. The on-call rota means that staff have access to support whenever they need it. Use of agency or relief staff has reduced, and therefore children are cared for by staff who are familiar to them and aware of their needs and vulnerabilities.

Managers have a clear understanding of children's progress and work in a multi-agency way to progress children's plans. Managers have also demonstrated some creativity in implementing plans when children have initially not engaged with professionals.

Staff receive regular supervision, and they are also appropriately trained. However, there is a gap in staff training about how to conduct room searches. As a result, a recommendation has been made for the manager to ensure staff have the relevant knowledge and skills.

The manager has an appropriate understanding of the time frame for the submission of safeguarding notifications. However, on at least one occasion when she was absent, this was overlooked. This reduces the opportunity for the regulator to have oversight and ensure all actions needed to safeguard children have been taken.

When staff are recruited for the home, safe practices are followed, and the induction is well planned and delivered. This ensures children are cared for by staff who have the relevant skills and do not pose a risk to them.

There are positive relationships with other professionals, which provide staff with direct access to the right people to support the children and meet their varying needs. One child has been given additional support to explore their identity and appropriate links have been established for specialist intervention and advice.

Managers and leaders are aware of children's wishes, views and feelings, but on some occasions, due to organisational policy, are unable to meet these wishes. Children do not feel they have been given adequate explanations when their wishes could not be met. Additionally, they do not feel their requests have been considered on their own merit. This does not help children to feel their views are valued, and that they are listened to.

Since the previous inspection and monitoring visit, there was significant improvement noted by inspectors. The compliance notices and previous requirements have been met. The atmosphere in the home feels more settled, and staff appear confident in their roles and managers expectations of them.

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff help each child to— take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(iii)) This refers to ensuring regular health appointments are arranged and attended as set out in plans and/or arising from meeting actions.	28 February 2022
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— help each child to understand how to keep safe; and- 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)(ii)(d)) This refers to ensuring children do not place themselves at risk of criminalisation through their online activity.	28 February 2022

This also refers to ensuring there are no harmful items in circulation within the home.	
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)) This refers to ensuring written risk assessments are kept up to date to accurately reflect current risks and include the most recent strategies employed to mitigate these risks.	28 February 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) This refers to ensuring a notification is submitted, including at times when a manager is absent.	28 February 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the

placing authority in writing at the time of placement. (Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)

- The registered person should ensure that children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs (around conducting room searches) and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

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: Room - AF97, Goole Council Offices, Church Street, Goole, East Yorkshire DN14 5BG

Responsible individual: Eoin Rush

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Regulatory Inspector (Lead)
Jan Edwards, Her Majesty's Inspector

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