

SC037984

Registered provider: Darlington Borough Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and/or emotional difficulties. Three children were living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The registered manager left the home in January 2022. A new manager is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted.

Inspection date: 11 October 2022

This monitoring visit

This children's home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 22 and 23 August 2022. This was because the manager failed to take appropriate action to protect children from serious harm. Ofsted issued four compliance notices under regulation 11, 12, 13 and 14. Ofsted also raised a further two requirements. Actions taken to address these two further requirements have not been considered as part of this monitoring visit.

Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit on 11 October 2022. The purpose of this visit was to review the progress and the actions taken to meet the compliance notices. This monitoring visit included a review of documents, a tour of the building, and discussions and interviews with children, staff and a parent.

Concerns with regard to staff training identified at the last inspection have not been resolved. For example, some staff have completed trauma and attachment training, and other staff, including agency staff, are still to do this. This means that some staff do not have an understanding of trauma-informed practice and cannot apply this to providing better care to the children, or to building effective relationships.

One child continues to struggle to manage their health needs and this has a detrimental impact on their health. The manager stated that all staff have received e-learning training for this specific health need. However, agency workers at the home have not completed this training, and necessary face-to-face training by a medical professional has not yet been delivered. This means that the child continues to be at risk of harm due to staff not being appropriately trained.

Children's risk assessments have improved. They provide staff with clear actions to follow to manage the risk of self-harm. The risk assessments did not include when staff should check on a child following an incident of self-harm. The manager acted swiftly on this and amended the risk assessment. This means that the child receives a consistent approach during difficult times.

The manager has introduced a new missing-from-home document. This includes each child's missing-from-home protocol and what actions staff need to take to locate the child as quickly and safely as possible. Furthermore, staff have completed missing-from-home training.

The concerns around staffing have been rectified. The home now has a staff member working through the night. Staff reported that this has made a positive difference to the running of the home.

Processes have changed around the admission of children into the home. The manager now has more autonomy over this process, and can now professionally challenge senior managers before the child moves into the home if there are concerns over matching. This means that children will be better matched and that they will not experience unnecessary disruption in their lives.

The inspector concluded from this monitoring visit that progress had been made and that the compliance notices under regulation 12 and 14 were met. Compliance notices 11 and 13 have not been fully met and have been reissued in part.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2022	Full	Inadequate
01/03/2022	Full	Good
14/08/2019	Full	Good
15/05/2018	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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— 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— protect and promote each child's welfare; provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably. (Regulation 6 (1)(b) (2)(ii)(vii))	25 September 2022
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— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(i)(iv))	25 September 2022
*The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; and	27 November 2022

positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— strive to gain each child’s respect and trust; that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(c) (2)(a)(viii)(b))	
*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; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; 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; and demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)(f)(g)(i))	27 November 2022

*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: SC037984

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Darlington Borough Council

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Feethams, Darlington, County Durham
DL1 5QT

Responsible individual: Christopher Bell

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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