

SC356963

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and run by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 1 and 2 August 2023

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: 16 May 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

At the full inspection on 16 and 17 May 2023, significant shortfalls were identified in the leadership and management arrangements. This affected the safeguarding arrangements for the children. Consequently, two compliance notices under regulation 12 and 13, and four requirements under regulation 8, 14, 40 and 45 were issued.

Due to these shortfalls, Ofsted also issued a restriction of accommodation, meaning that the provider could not admit any more children into the home.

During a monitoring visit on 16 June 2023, Ofsted found that not all the steps in the compliance notices had been met. These notices were reissued and the restriction of accommodation notice remained in place.

Since the last visit, Ofsted has received a whistle-blowing complaint. This, and the provider's progress in meeting the two compliance notices, were considered at this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/05/2023	Full	Inadequate
14/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

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

Children's bedrooms are personalised. However, at the time of the inspection, one bedroom did have an unpleasant smell. Although there are plans in place to address this, this has not been done in a timely manner. The rest of the home is clean and well maintained. Books are accessible for children, and they have a computer room that they can use at their leisure. This creates a homely environment for the children to enjoy spending their time.

For some children, education is a struggle. The registered manager advocates on the children's behalf to get a more suitable provision that will meet the children's needs. Nevertheless, for one child, their education is an ongoing concern and there is no identified school for them to start in September 2023.

The children have a positive experience living in this home. Children enjoy the activities that they do with the staff such as going to the cinema, walking and other trips out. This develops the children's self-esteem and confidence when out in public places.

Staff support the children to attend their routine medical appointments. Staff carry out one-to-one sessions with the children around key health issues such as keeping fit. This helps the children to understand the risks associated with poor health. This, in turn, helps the children to consider their long-term health needs. As a result, one child now enjoys playing rugby for a local team.

The registered manager and the staff recognise the importance of the children's relationships with their families. The staff support the children to have time with those who are important to them, whether this is face to face or virtually. This helps the children to maintain these relationships. As a result, the children are not isolated from their families.

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

Ofsted was notified that one child was using an electric scooter in public places. This is illegal. The child does not use the protective wear that the staff provide. Furthermore, when the child uses the scooter during the night, their visibility is restricted as they do not wear reflective clothing. Risk management plans that are in place to reduce the risk of injury are not effective. This increases the risk of harm to the child.

Since the last inspection, there has been one missing-from-home incident. This incident received a multi-agency response. Following the incident, the child received an independent return home visit and the staff spoke to the child about being out

late at night and the linked risks. This reinforced a safety message to the child and shows the child that the adults around them care.

Children's emotional health and well-being are improving. Social workers for the children have all recognised that the children are more settled living in the home and that they are kept safe. As a result, there have been no incidents of self-harm or physical interventions.

There have not been any incidents of bullying since the last inspection. Staff monitor the children around the home and they will challenge any bullying behaviour in the first instance. Children are forming positive relationships with each other around the home.

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

The registered manager is supported by a deputy and other managers within the local authority. The staff feel supported by their colleagues and the management team. Because of this, the children are now living in a calmer environment.

The provider has taken sufficient steps to improve the management and leadership arrangements to ensure that the children's safety and welfare are better promoted. As a result, the restriction of accommodation will expire on 18 August 2023.

The registered manager is aware of the strengths of the service and the areas for continued development. Management oversight in the home has improved. The managers have identified shortfalls in the staff's practice and they have taken effective action. This enables the staff to continue their learning so that they can develop their skills. It also provides the managers with a forum to address and identify if any additional support and guidance is needed to help the staff in their roles.

Team meetings and supervision sessions take place frequently. These forums offer the staff an opportunity to reflect on their practice, both in a group and individually. This helps the staff to develop in their roles.

Professionals, including children's social workers, said that there are no concerns regarding the communication between themselves and the staff. They also said that the staff advocate well on the children's behalf. This means that all professionals are kept up to date about recent incidents, and that they are able to use this information to plan suitable care for the children.

Staff, and the child's advocate, have supported one child to share their views about a review of the allowances that the children receive. This has been reviewed by senior managers and an increase in allowances has been agreed. This demonstrates to the child that their views are taken seriously.

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 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; help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii))	2 September 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(v)(vii))	2 September 2023

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that the children's bedrooms are clean and fresh. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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: SC356963

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Registered provider address: Civic Centre 3, Huddersfield, Yorkshire HD1 2EY

Responsible individual: Tom Brailsford

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspectors

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector
Lee Riley, Social Care Inspector

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