

SC356963

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to four children who may have experienced social and/or emotional difficulties.

There are currently four children living at this home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection date: 4 January 2023

Date of last inspection: 14 June 2022

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

The care of children

Children receive individualised, nurturing care from staff who know the children well. Staff hold the positive relationships that they build with children in high regard. This provides children with a sense of stability and security.

Children are supported to spend time with the people in their lives who are important to them. Staff have built positive relationships with the children's families and friends. This helps the children to feel cared about. Staff help the children to do the activities that they enjoy when they spend time with their families and friends, and this has given them a sense of belonging.

Children are making progress with their health because they are helped by staff to access the right support. This means that children have improved physical, emotional and mental health outcomes.

Staff understand and promote the children's education needs. Staff advocate for the children when they experience barriers to their education. This means that children receive the right support in school, which helps them to make progress.

Staff advocate for the children, and they ensure that they have access to independent advocacy services. This positive approach has meant that children's views and complaints have been listened to.

The safety of children

The risks to children are identified, understood and well managed by staff. However, the written documents do not always provide clear steps for staff to follow for all the identified risks to children. One child is at risk of using alcohol, but the written document does not provide staff with clear steps to follow if the child became intoxicated. This lack of clarity in the written documents has the potential to impede staff decision-making to ensure that children are protected. This shortfall was raised at the last inspection and has not been met.

Some of the children who live at this home go missing regularly. The guidance for staff to follow when reporting a child as missing is not clear in the child's plan. This has led to an inconsistent approach in the action that staff take to report a child as missing, and places the child at increased risk of harm.

The risks to some children have increased because of the relationship that they have built with the peers who they live with. Some children are at increased risk of criminality when they are in the community. The relationship between two of the children has led to physical fighting and threats of harm using a weapon. Despite the support provided by staff, the children have not restored their relationship.

Staff are well prepared to respond to challenging situations and behaviours. When children have been physically restrained, this has been necessary and proportionate to ensure that children are safe. This provides children with a sense of security and safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. They provide effective leadership to the staff team, who said that they feel supported.

The manager has made changes to audit and monitoring systems to track the risks to children, the progress that children are making, and to review staff development. This has led to improved management oversight and means that shortfalls have been identified and addressed. However, the systems in place do not take account of the quality of the information in written documents.

The manager has made changes to improve the system for managing complaints. When children have made a complaint, the manager has acted to investigate and provided the child with feedback about the outcome of the complaint. This reassures children that they are listened to and that any concerns they have are taken seriously.

The manager works collaboratively with other agencies to ensure that individual children receive the right support to meet their needs. Strong partnership working means that staff are supported to deliver a high standard of care to the children.

Staff receive regular supervision. Records show that staff reflect on their practice and their training and development. Team meetings take place regularly and provide staff with opportunities to discuss the children and any changes to their plans. This means that the care that children receive is consistent.

Leaders and managers have implemented changes that have meant that the majority of the requirements made at the last full inspection are met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/11/2019	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Full	Sustained effectiveness

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 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— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone; communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; and de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(iii)(iv)(v)(xi))	10 February 2023
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	10 February 2023

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;

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; and

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.

(Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iv)(v)(vi))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that there are clear steps in place for staff to follow for all identified risks for children, including the risk of children using alcohol and the risk of children going missing.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC356963

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kirklees Metropolitan Council

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

Responsible individual: Elaine McShane

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspector

Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector

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