

SC356963

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and operated by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care for up to four children who may have behavioural and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

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 9 August 2021 to carry out a full inspection. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection date: 4 November 2021

Date of last inspection: 9 August 2021

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

One child has moved out of this home in a planned way. The registered manager used his knowledge of the child's needs to advocate for the most appropriate placement for him. A member of staff has visited the child in his new placement. The registered manager also facilitated a swimming activity with the child and another child living in this home. The child has had a smooth transition and maintains positive links with the home.

Two children have moved into the home. The registered manager acknowledges that, as both children were placed in emergencies, they were not assessed and prepared as well as he would have liked. Despite this, both children have made progress since moving into the home. The registered manager has reviewed impact risk assessments and concludes that the children are appropriately placed alongside other children living in this home.

One child stated that living in the home was better now. Staff report that the home is calmer, and children are more settled. Children have not been involved in any serious incidents since the inspection in August 2021. Staff have managed children's behaviour effectively in the home without using physical interventions or requesting police support. The registered manager has not received complaints from the local community. Children are therefore having more positive experiences living in this home.

Children are making progress. One child has joined a football club and staff encourage him by watching his matches. Another child spends more time in communal areas of the home rather than staying in his bedroom. Several children have increased time with their families. Staff feel proud of the achievements that children make.

Staff report children as missing to the police when they do not return home on time. Staff do not always search for children or record accurately to evidence searches they have undertaken. Children are sometimes returned by the police as staff are unable to collect them. Children, therefore, have mixed experiences when they have been reported as missing.

In addition, staff do not routinely visually check children when they are out to verify their whereabouts and their safety. Staff do not engage effectively with one child to provide alternative activities to reduce unsupervised time. Staff respond inconsistently. However, overall, all children have reduced their missing from home episodes and exposure to potential harm from their starting points.

Staff talk with children about important areas of their lives. Staff do not always record this using language which is child friendly. The quality and frequency of key-work sessions vary for children. Staff miss opportunities to engage with children through activities. One child is applying for a university place, but staff have not yet taken him to attend a university open day. Staff are, therefore, not supplementing support the child is getting through college to help him reach his full potential.

The registered manager has responded to meet all requirements from the full inspection. Staff have now received bespoke training to help them manage challenging behaviour in the home. Staff describe feeling more skilled and confident.

The registered manager communicates and works effectively with others. He attends risk management meetings to ensure that children's risks are understood and reduced. He is currently liaising with the missing person coordinator to clarify roles and expectations when children do not return home on time. Social workers report that the registered manager advocates well for children and escalates matters as required to ensure appropriate decision-making for children's care and education plans.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/11/2019	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/07/2018	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— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)) This relates to staff providing key-work sessions and opportunities to help children fulfil their potential.	10 December 2021
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; and have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)) This specifically relates to staff routinely checking children's whereabouts. This also relates to staff supporting children to choose alternative and structured activities.	10 December 2021
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	10 December 2021

In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

that staff—

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v))

Recommendations

- The registered person should support staff to be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping, ensuring that records are accurate and written in a way that will be helpful for the child. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Information about this inspection

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full 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:

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

Responsible individual: Elaine McShane

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspector

Joanna Warburton, Social Care Inspector

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