

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 operated by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation 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 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on the 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 2 November 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. This report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 August 2021

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. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 26 November 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2019	Full	Good
20/11/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
31/07/2018	Full	Good
21/11/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Children's day-to-day experiences vary depending on their individual situations and their sense of belonging to the home and the relationships they have with staff. Despite this, some children do have positive experiences and are making steady progress.

Children say they feel safe and enjoy trusted and secure relationships with some staff. However, the inconsistent approach to behaviour management has resulted in increased disruption and police intervention at the home. Children have been negatively affected by this.

Children are welcomed into the home. The staff and managers spend time getting to know children, which supports their care planning. For one child their move into semi-independent living was brought forward, partly due to the disruption in the home. Despite some of the challenges, staff helped to prepare this child for their move. As a result, they have settled into their new home.

Children have regular one-to-one key-work sessions with staff, where they can express their wishes and feelings. Children take part in fortnightly meetings where they help to plan menus and activities like go-karting, trampolining, football and laser quest, and share their views on the running of the home. All the children have structured activity and education planners that staff update weekly.

Children's educational progress is mixed. Two children have gained positive qualifications. However, one child's attendance is poor despite staff attempts to improve the child's engagement in education. This lack of engagement limits the child's future prospects.

The children's health and developmental needs are prioritised by staff, and all the children have up-to-date health assessments. Staff work in partnership with the looked after children's nurse and the home's in-house clinical psychologist. This helps to support children's physical and emotional health needs.

The children experience an environment where they can develop their independent living and social skills. This will enable them to manage any future transitions. Professionals told the inspector how one child has become significantly more independent and is now engaging well with his peers in the community and continues to have aspirations of going to university.

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

There are behaviour management plans and risk assessments in place. These are reviewed regularly by the manager and deputy manager in consultation with social workers and other agencies, to help safeguard the children.

On occasions, staff struggle to manage the children's behaviours safely. This has resulted in an increase of serious incidents. The inability to manage these situations leaves children at risk of harm and of being criminalised.

Despite the challenges, staff use restorative practice. This allows the children to rebuild relationships and develop an understanding of how their behaviours can impact on them and others. As a result, children are beginning to learn how to make better choices, which helps to reduce their risk-taking behaviour.

Staff access training and consultations with the in-house clinical psychologist and the attention deficit hyperactivity disorder specialist, which supports them in their roles. This is helping staff to develop new strategies to better support the children.

When children go missing from the home, the staff respond quickly. The staff search local areas where children are known to go, and work in partnership with other agencies to reduce the risk. However, despite this, missing from home remains a concerning feature, with some children going missing on a regular basis. This exposes them to a risk of harm.

Regulatory requirements have not always been met when there has been a significant incident involving police intervention. Some of these incidents have not been notified to Ofsted. This hinders the regulator's ability to monitor safeguarding practice. This is an accepted priority area for the provider.

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

The manager and deputy manager are child-focused and are positive role models to the children and staff team.

Staff access regular training, supervision, annual appraisals, team meetings and clinical supervision to support the staff's developmental needs. However, the supervisions and appraisals viewed by the inspector were not always analytical and reflective. This means that opportunities to support staff development are not effective.

The staff team members are from diverse backgrounds and this has enabled the children to access positive role models and begin to develop a sense of identity in the home and the wider community. However, there has been high-level usage of casual staff due to the impact of the pandemic and recruitment. This has had an overall impact on the consistency of care that the children receive.

The manager and deputy manager continue to work in partnership with specialist agencies, such as the children and adolescent mental health service and the youth offending service, to help meet the needs of the children. The manager will make referrals for specialist support and assessments to ensure that the children's needs are fully met. For example, they referred one child to a specialist project to address issues around knife crime and county lines.

There have been high levels of complaints in the community. All complaints are addressed effectively in agreed timescales and the manager provides feedback to complainants as required. As a result, there remain positive links in the community.

The manager has an impact risk assessment for matching new admissions to the home. However, this was not used effectively on one occasion. Ineffective matching has had a significant impact on the group dynamics and has led to an increase in disruption in the home.

There are monitoring systems in place, which are continually being improved. This enables the manager and deputy manager to have oversight of the children's progress and staff development. The managers have an understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for development.

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 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; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(xi)) In particular, ensure that members of staff are provided with the skills to manage behaviour effectively.	1 November 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 the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(b)) This is with particular reference to ensuring that staff have the necessary skills to manage children in crisis.	1 November 2021
The care planning standard is that children—	1 November 2021

receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b) (2)(a))	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	1 November 2021

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

Responsible individual: Elaine McShane

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspector

Noel Cooper, Social Care Inspector

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