

SC356963

Registered provider: Kirklees Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and run by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 July 2017

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: 23 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- Some young people are unwilling to share their whereabouts with staff when out of the home. These young people spend long periods away from the home and staff have been unable to engage them in the routines and activities offered. Plans agreed by managers for staff to better understand the risks posed to young people have not been communicated to staff.
- Care practice in some areas is weak as opportunities to engage some young people via their interests have been missed.
- Staff and managers have not secured the required documentation from social workers in order to make decisions on behalf of young people and inform the plans for their proposed transition from the home.
- Care planning for some young people is weak and has not been challenged by the management team in a timely way. As a result, staff have little influence over some young people.
- Management systems for improving the impact and quality of care offered to young people are weak. There are no means of recording, evaluating or action-planning deficits identified.
- Staff supervision is not in line with the local authority timescales and the recording of such is variable in quality.

The children's home's strengths:

- Some young people have made good progress in their lives and experienced stability while at the home. They value education and have emotionally benefited from increased contact with their families.
- Some young people have benefited from the support that staff offer and their ability to manage frustration and anger has improved.
- Most young people do not go missing and there have been no physical interventions since the last inspection. Incidents are low in number and this reflects the increased stability that the home is now experiencing.
- The management team now benefits from stability in senior management and leadership. As a result, admissions to the home are planned and suitable.
- Religious and cultural needs are well supported by staff and young people feel respected and valued.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
23/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
31/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
15/09/2015	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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12. (2) In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular reference to, taking account of information provided in return home interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child, the registered person must ensure— (a) that staff— (i) 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.	31/08/2017
14. (1) In order to meet the care planning standard the care planning standard is that children— (a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.	31/08/2017
13. The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; (f) 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; (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— (h) monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	30/09/2017
11. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (viii) strive to gain each child's respect and trust.	30/09/2017
9. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	30/09/2017

(a) that staff help each child to— (i) develop the child's interests and hobbies; (ii) participate in activities that the child enjoys and which meet and expand the child's interests and preferences.	
8. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (b) that staff— (iii) understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child overcome any such barriers; (v) help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment.	30/09/2017
36. (1) The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— (a) include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of each entry.	31/08/2017

Inspection judgements

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

Not all young people engage with the staff on a regular and meaningful basis. Some young people spend long periods out of the home on a daily basis and some young people have refused to return from agreed contact with family. Staff have been unable to secure these young people's commitment to joining in activities or spending mealtimes in the home.

Staff have not been sufficiently proactive in working with young people's interests in attempts to build trusting relationships. For example, requests to visit a favourite football team's grounds has not been organised by staff, nor increased opportunities to play pool with a particular member of staff. These opportunities have been missed and as result some young people remain disengaged.

Care plans are unclear for some young people and the impact that the home is having in their lives is negligible. This is primarily due to them spending prolonged periods with family, outside of that agreed by social workers. Because young people are spending so much time away from the home, staff are unable to provide clear insight into their strengths and areas of their lives requiring focused work and support. This compromises the plans for them to move to semi-independence.

Some young people experience difficulties with engaging consistently with school. Staff have worked hard to encourage young people's attendance. However, plans regarding

how behaviour is to be managed are not always followed in school. In response, staff have not appropriately challenged these incidents and sought adherence to the plan. As a result, opportunities to avoid exclusions have been missed.

Some young people have made good progress in relation to their education, attending regularly and sitting final exams. They value education and are developing aspirations for their future lives. One young person has been supported to successfully make the transition into mainstream schooling, about which he is very proud of himself. He felt that staff gave him the right levels of encouragement in order for him to overcome his fears.

All young people are appropriately supported to maintain contact with family. Through the support that staff offer, some young people have significantly improved the frequency of seeing family members. This culminated in one young person enjoying a holiday abroad with his parent. Young people's sense of identity and cultural belonging are actively supported. One young person described recent staff support through a fasting season as 'brilliant', waking him early and preparing food.

Some young people have made progress with regards to their emotional stability and a social worker commented, 'He has come on leaps and bounds, made a lot of progress in his education and in his interaction with people. He used to find it very difficult to interact socially. He has made massive improvements over the last year.'

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

Most young people at the home do not go missing or have prolonged and serious drug misuse. When drug misuse does occur, staff ensure that young people are offered specialist advice and support to prevent further occurrences. However, some young people for whom these services are relevant refuse to engage.

Some young people spend long periods away from the home and refuse to disclose their whereabouts. As a result, staff are unable to fully assess risks to their welfare and in turn advice and support are not focused nor specific. Plans agreed by managers to gain insight into the risks have not been acted upon by staff.

Staff on the whole, appropriately report and liaise with other agencies when young people have gone missing. However, there have been incidents whereby documentation has not been completed in a timely manner and on one occasion a young person was not reported to the police until the following day. At the last inspection, a requirement was made in relation to the offer of return home interviews to young people being clearly recorded and any resulting information being evaluated. This is not yet embedded into staff practice.

Physical intervention is rarely used or required. There have been no instances since the last inspection whereby this has been necessary. Planned admissions to the home have ensured that since the last full inspection incidents of aggression, damage within the

home and overall disruption have decreased. Young people report that the home feels settled and that they feel safe.

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

The manager is registered to manage the home and has been since 2007. He is suitably qualified and experienced. The manager was not available during this inspection and therefore assistance was offered by the deputy manager and service manager for the home.

Since the last inspection, not all requirements have been achieved. The management team has not been able to secure all the documentation needed to inform young people's plans and risks. For example, pathway plans that would indicate clearly young people's needs and future living arrangements have not been updated in a timely manner. Delegated authority forms that would reduce the need of staff to refer back to social workers for decisions and the chasing of referrals to other agencies, have not all been secured.

Some young people's plans are not being progressed and assessments have been delayed. This is primarily due to the young person choosing to live with family members. The managers have not requested early reviews in order to address the efficacy of these plans.

Although there are systems in place to review the quality of care, auditing systems are weak. They do not result in evaluation or action planning to address identified shortfalls. The current system relies on the memory of managers to recall the deficits. Supervision of staff is not always within local authority timescales and expectations and the brevity of the recordings limits managerial oversight. It is unclear from the current system whether there are plans to address the shortfalls.

There have been ongoing changes of senior management since the last full inspection. This has interrupted a full evaluation of the quality of care offered and embedding monitoring processes that lead to continuous improvement. There is now a recently appointed permanent service manager in place who is committed to ensuring that deficits are identified and decisive action is taken to address shortfalls.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is

making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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 Council, 30 Market Street, Huddersfield HD1 2HG

Responsible individual: Anne Coyle

Registered manager: Victor Szczesnowicz

Inspector

Pauline Yates: social care inspector

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