

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 behavioural and/or emotional difficulties. There are currently three children living at this home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2022

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: 4 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

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

Children living at this home have mixed experiences. Children's relationships with each other are not always good. One child said they liked living at the home but felt bullied by another child. One child said they are happy at the home, but they don't get along with another child. This means that some children feel unsettled.

Children have built positive relationships with staff, and staff know the children well. The children said that staff look out for their best interests. One social worker said, 'Staff are always there for the children; they don't give up.' This helps children to feel valued.

Transitions for children moving into the home have been unplanned. Children have moved in on the same day as another child has moved out. One child complained to the manager that they do not get enough time to prepare for somebody new moving into the home.

Children's health needs are not always met. The plan to support one child with their dietary needs is not clear. Staff said that there has been an inconsistent approach in supporting the child. This has caused some confusion for the child and limits progress in this area.

Children's progress and engagement in education vary. However, staff encourage learning and look at ways to support children to go to school. One child is awaiting exam results to confirm a place at university. For one child who does not attend school, securing a suitable placement to meet their needs is a matter of urgency. At the time of the inspection, plans were yet to be finalised.

Children are helped to learn skills to prepare them to live independently. Staff recognise children's abilities, starting points and areas of need. This means that the support children receive is individual to their level of need and understanding.

The quality of records could be improved. Care plans lack objectives and actions to meet children's needs. This means that conversations staff have with children are mostly reactive and do not target children's areas of need in a proactive and planned way.

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

Risk assessments and response plans do not always contain up-to-date information. The risk of ligature was not assessed where this is a known risk to one child. In addition, records contain conflicting information. This means that staff do not have access to the correct information to enable them to keep children safe.

The children who go missing from home are at risk of exploitation. Children have been missing in circumstances that are considered serious and placed them at risk of significant harm. Staff responses when children are missing are inconsistent. Staff do not always follow protocol set out in the child's plan. This means children are not always protected and their whereabouts are unknown.

The manager and staff are proactive in challenging bullying; however, this has not always been effective. One child continues to experience bullying by another child. This has a negative impact on the emotional well-being of the child being bullied and is reported.

Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that children who move into the home are suitably matched. The manager does not have autonomy to make decisions about children moving into the home. One child moved into the home despite the manager identifying significant risks. For another child, the impact of risk was assessed after they had moved in. This means that compatibility issues are not fully assessed, and children come to live at the home when their needs cannot be met safely.

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

The manager has good relationships with professionals and multi-agency working is embedded in practice. Professionals said that communication with the manager and staff is good. The manager has sought support from other agencies to educate and consult with staff around the children's areas of need. This helps staff to learn and develop.

Leaders and managers do not have effective systems to maintain sufficient oversight of the home. For example, incidents are not evaluated and lack evidence of debrief with staff. Staff review and update records but monitoring systems have failed to identify gaps. Key information is not routinely disseminated; on one occasion, sharing such information could have prevented a child from going missing.

Leaders and managers have not ensured that the staff team is working well together to deliver care. Staff talked about inconsistent approaches and decision-making within the team. Staff have used supervision to discuss conflict. However, not all staff have received regular supervision. This has the potential to affect the quality of care children receive.

Ofsted is not always notified about serious incidents that occur at the home. This prevents Ofsted from monitoring safeguarding concerns and actions to address these.

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 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; have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v))	14 July 2022
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— research and developments in relation to the ways in which the needs of children are best met; and	14 July 2022

feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(g)(i)(ii)(h))	
The care planning standard is that children— 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))	14 July 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	14 July 2022

Recommendation

- 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

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

Responsible individual: Elaine McShane

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspectors

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector
Rachel Webster, Social Care Inspector

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