

SC356963

Registered provider: Kirklees Metropolitan 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 social and emotional difficulties. At the time of the inspection, four children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 16 and 17 May 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious and widespread failures that mean children are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor and they are not making progress.

Date of last inspection: 14 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/06/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
04/11/2021	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good
26/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the last inspection, there have been significant shortfalls in the safety and protection of children and the leadership and management of the home. These shortfalls have exposed children to risk of harm.

This full inspection was expedited after the regulator received two complaints about the home. Both complaints were in relation to the well-being and safety of children not being met. The inspector found this to be the case during the inspection. Children are not protected from known risks, and their risk assessments are not accurate or individualised. Plans are not updated when incidents occur and do not detail children's vulnerabilities. Staff do not follow children's plans as they should, and this has exposed children to the risk of harm.

Staff in particular struggle to keep one child safe and cannot manage the associated risks in and outside of the home. To manage this risk the child moved out of the home into temporary accommodation with staff. Other children who have lived in the home for some time have experienced an unsettled and chaotic period. This is because the needs and presenting behaviours of some of the children have changed significantly over recent months. Children said they like staff and enjoy going out on activities with them. However, the children's day-to-day experiences are mixed. Children said that, on occasion, their days go well but frequently they do not.

Currently, one child attends education and is doing well. The school attendance of three other children is of concern. Staff do not provide children with structure during the day. Some children leave the home during school hours. Attempts made by staff to engage children in education, training or employment have been ineffective. This means that children's opportunities to make improvements are reduced.

Staff support the children with any worries they have around health appointments. Children trust staff, and staff manage to encourage children to attend these appointments. This helps children to lead healthier lives.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: inadequate

Two of the children have been able to gain possession of weapons while out in the community. This has been out of the control of staff and has placed children and staff at risk of serious harm.

Children's risk management plans are not updated with recent and important information following incidents. This does not allow staff to understand whether children's risks are reducing or increasing in frequency. Furthermore, one child who is working in a restaurant has no risk management plan in place. This does not

provide staff with strategies to follow to ensure the child's safety when working. This failure could lead to the child being exposed to unnecessary risks.

There is bullying in the home between the children. This is not managed effectively by the registered manager and has led to violence and threats towards one child in particular. Leaders and managers have failed to implement effective risk management strategies that help staff protect children against bullying behaviour. This failure has impacted on one child's mental health, as they say that they do not feel safe living in the home. The child told the inspector that they stay in their bedroom to avoid being bullied.

Not all staff have followed the children's care plans when they are missing from home. This lack of action from staff does not provide children with positive messages that staff care about them and will act accordingly to keep them safe. Also, children's missing-from-home protocols do not include relevant information about the risks affecting children, such as self-injurious behaviour. This does not provide other professionals such as the police with the information they need in order to determine the child's level of risk of harm when they are missing.

Staff physically intervene to keep everyone safe when necessary. However, the inspector found records were poorly written which did not identify that holds were not always used proportionately and children's health needs were not appropriately monitored or supported. This practice placed this child at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

Significant regulatory breaches were found relating to the leadership and management of the home. There is a lack of monitoring and review systems in place to identify and address shortfalls to facilitate continuous improvement and safe practice in the home. Consequently, the care being provided to children does not meet their individual needs or promote their safety and well-being.

The registered manager and responsible individual do not have effective monitoring and oversight of important records and documents. Staff are not being supported to develop their practice. Supervisions are not reflective and are not offered in accordance with the home's supervision policy. These failures prevent leaders and managers from measuring progress or identifying trends and patterns in the quality of care provided to children by staff.

The registered manager has not notified Ofsted about serious incidents relating to the care of children. This does not provide Ofsted with the information of how staff, leaders and managers respond to incidents of a safeguarding nature.

The registered manager does not effectively manage the staff to ensure that they feel valued and confident in their roles. During the inspection, staff raised concerns about variations in staff practice that have caused a divide in the team. The registered manager has not managed this rift. As a result, staff are not providing the

children with consistent care. The actions the registered manager has taken to address this issue has been ineffective.

There has been no evaluation of the quality of work carried out since the last inspection. In addition, there is no action plan to improve the quality of care in the home moving forward. The registered manager has failed to provide Ofsted with a quality of care review since September 2022. This failure means that there is no record, reflection or analysis of the care provided in the home.

Staff in the home have been working with significant risks. After considering these risks and the effect on the other children's experiences, senior leaders from the local authority offered assurances to the regulator that they would take immediate action to address the main concerns. This involved one child moving out of the home.

The assurances offered by the provider prevented Ofsted from taking more stringent enforcement action. However, because of the multiple failures identified during this inspection, Ofsted issued a restriction of accommodation notice, which prevents further children moving into the home. Two compliance notices under regulation 12 (the protection of children standard) and regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard), and four further requirements have also been issued to the provider.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
* 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— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; 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; demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(b)(e)(f)(g)(h))	11 June 2023
*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—	11 June 2023

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; 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; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home’s child protection policies; 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)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vii)(b))	
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— support each child’s learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(ii)(v)(vii))	11 June 2023

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. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))	11 June 2023
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))	11 June 2023
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and	11 June 2023

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff.
(Regulation 45 (1) (2)(a)(b)(c) (3) (4)(a)(b) (5))

* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

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: Tom Brailsford

Registered manager: Benjamin Lancaster

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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