

SC382595

Registered provider: Evolution Children Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation and may provide care for up to five children with emotional and social difficulties.

Three children were living in the home at the time of inspection.

The home has a suitably qualified manager who registered with Ofsted in August 2016.

Inspection dates: 6 and 7 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 11 October 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/10/2022	Full	Good
22/06/2021	Full	Good
03/09/2019	Full	Good
29/10/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide children with care that is individualised to meet their specific needs. They encourage children to try new experiences and support them to develop their independence within the home and community. This helps children to make progress from their starting points.

One social worker commented on improvements in a child's attendance at school due to support and encouragement from staff. Another professional described a child's growth in confidence and the positive impact that has had on all aspects of the child's life. This means that children make progress due to the support and influence of the adults who care for them.

Staff work well with children's families and support familial relationships. Staff communicate well with parents and families to keep them up to date. When describing their child's key worker, one parent said, 'I know [Member of staff] cares about [Child's name].' Children benefit from the positive influences from staff, which help them to develop their relationships with their parents and families.

Children's health is a priority for staff. Children are registered with health professionals and are supported to attend appointments. When needed, children are supported by staff through direct work to access external resources, such as mental health services or accessing a gym. This helps children to take responsibility for their own health and well-being.

Children who live in the home have different experiences. Not all children attend school or college. One child spends long periods in their bedroom and does not have structure to their day. Staff are working with this child to help them to identify suitable training or employment.

The property, in most parts, is homely and inviting. Children have personalised bedrooms that are well furnished. The manager has plans to decorate the home and the children's views have been sought in relation to this. The home needs some repair, as carpets on the lower floor and staircase are worn and present a tripping hazard in some places.

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

Children's risks are known to staff. When there is a serious incident of concern, staff work with children to help them to feel safe. Discussions with children take place regularly and focus on important aspects of children's lives. This helps children to understand how to keep safe.

One of the home's strengths is the relationships between staff and the children. Children said that they have more than one adult who cares for them who they

trust. The children said that staff actively listen to them and, because of this, staff understand their needs. These positive relationships help children to feel valued.

Staff focus on children's positive behaviours and consequences are not used in the home. Reparation is used to help children to understand the impact of their behaviour and learn from it. This supports children to reflect on previous experiences and make decisions in their best interests.

The provider follows safer recruitment practices, which ensure that the adults who care for the children are checked and assessed as being safe to do so.

Leaders and managers have not made it clear what actions they expect staff to take when children go missing from home. There is a missing-from-home policy, but actions for staff to take in these circumstances are not transferred into children's care plans. This means that the staff respond inconsistently when children go missing. Children's safety could be compromised if staff do not understand when to report children as missing to the police.

Fire doors are in place to protect children, staff and visitors should there be a fire within the home. Three out of four fire doors did not work effectively when tested during the inspection. Managers made arrangements to have these repaired immediately. The safety of both children and staff is compromised when fire safety equipment is not effectively maintained.

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

Leaders and managers have not ensured that at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first-aid qualification. One staff member working in the home had not completed this training despite working in the home for over a year. Other staff have not been provided with this essential training. This has meant that children who have needed first aid, had this delivered by adults who are not trained to do so. Leaders and managers made immediate plans to rectify this issue.

Not all staff, including the registered manager, receive supervision that allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children in their care. Records of supervision were incomplete and did not consider continuing professional development or training needs. One member of staff did not have their fitness to carry out their role formally appraised despite working in the home for over a year. This means that staff performance has not been a prioritised and opportunities to develop and improve the quality of care have been missed.

New staff are supported through an induction programme. More-experienced staff are expected to work towards necessary qualifications. Not all staff hold the required qualifications to help them to deliver quality services to children. Leaders and managers thought that some qualifications that staff hold were the equivalent standard of the qualification needed, but they are not. Leaders and managers failed to recognise this shortfall.

Leaders and managers have not kept the home's statement of purpose up to date so that it accurately reflects the care provided in the home. Details of staff and the qualifications they hold had not been updated and were therefore incorrect. The staff have not all received training as detailed in the statement of purpose. This includes physical intervention training. An inaccurate and out-of-date statement of purpose does not provide local authorities, children and their families with information about the home when they require it.

The home uses closed-circuit television to monitor the outside of the home. This is in place without a written policy to describe how it will support the safeguarding and well-being of children living in the home. Managers have not sought consent for the use of this from the children's placing local authorities. Although this was raised as a recommendation at the previous inspection, it was still in use during this inspection. It is therefore unclear whether professionals and children are aware of this intrusive surveillance.

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 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; understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and 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; that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b)(e)) In particular, this relates to ensuring that the children's risk assessments detail all known risk factors and provide staff with direction on how to reduce risks and help children to keep safe.	21 July 2023

It also relates to the registered manager ensuring that children's missing-from-home guidelines are individualised and followed by staff to ensure that children are protected from harm. The registered manager should have effective monitoring systems in place to ensure that arrangements to keep children safe are in place and being actioned by staff.	
The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. The registered person must ensure that— at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (1) (2)(a))	21 July 2023
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must— take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home; make arrangements for persons working at the home to receive suitable training in fire prevention. (Regulation 25 (1)(a)(c)) This specifically relates to ensuring that fire doors are in working order and that all staff are trained in fire safety.	21 July 2023
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years	21 July 2023

after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b) (5)(a))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (1) (4)(b)(c))	21 July 2023
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to— The registered person must— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. If a home has a website, the registered person must ensure that a copy of the statement of purpose is published on that website unless the registered person considers that such publication would prejudice the welfare of children in the home. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1) (3)(a)(b) (4) (5))	21 July 2023
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if— the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;	21 July 2023

the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(d))	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should provide a nurturing and supportive environment that is homely. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Regulation 40(4) requires the registered person to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious (40(4)(e)). ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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: SC382595

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Evolution Children Services Limited

Registered provider address: 17 Queens Lane, Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 1RN

Responsible individual: Helen Barrow

Registered manager: Paul Addison

Inspector

Joanne Wallis, Social Care Inspector

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