

SC391993

Registered provider: St Cuthbert's Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a charitable organisation and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to six children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The deputy manager has been acting as the manager since May 2018 and her post was made substantive in April 2019. The manager has not yet applied to be registered with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 August 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
---	------------

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: 24 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/07/2018	Full	Good
22/08/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/07/2016	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(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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and use this understanding to deliver care that meets the children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; and ensure that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6(1)(2)(v)(c)(i))	01/09/2019
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. Subject to paragraph (3), 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. (Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b))	01/09/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—	01/09/2019

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13(1)(b)(2)(c)(d))	
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. Subject to paragraph (2), the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular, provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the actions taken in response. (Regulation 34 (1)(b)(2)(d))	01/09/2019
Schedule 4 sets out the other information the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that there is a record showing, in respect of each person working in the home, the person's full name, their sex, date of birth, home address, qualifications relevant to, and experience of, work involving children, whether the person works at the home full-time or part-time (whether paid or not) and whether the person resides at the home.	01/09/2019
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality care review') at least once every six 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. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their	01/10/2019

parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1)(2)(a)(b)(5))	
--	--

Inspection judgements

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

The outcome judgement for the effectiveness of leaders and managers is inadequate. This is a graded judgement and means that the outcome for the overall experiences and progress of the young people can be judged no higher than requires improvement.

The children have individual case file records that are stored securely to protect their privacy. The staff complete residential plans and individual risk assessments to monitor the children's ongoing needs and how these will be met. However, a review of a child's case file carried out during the inspection showed that there was no documentation from the placing authority.

The poor management oversight of case files, including why the manager or the staff have not identified that important documentation is missing, and a lack of information about a child's history including the reasons why they have been accommodated, compromises the quality of the care provided.

The children's home is not maintained to a good standard. The garden area is overgrown and looks neglected, and some of the fencing is broken. Internally, there is evidence of wear and tear in most of the rooms, including damage to walls, doors and furniture. These examples of the condition of the home demonstrate that the standard is low and unacceptable. The condition of the home means that it is not welcoming to new children moving in. It also gives a message to children that they do not deserve to live in high-quality accommodation.

The children are making good progress. They have all done extremely well in school and their attendance rates are excellent. The manager is a good advocate for the children. For example, she challenged the local authority regarding a child's education. As a direct result of this intervention the child's needs were assessed, and they now have an education, health and care plan in place. This proactive way of working enhances the children's experiences.

The staff are caring and nurturing, and they want the best for the children. The children have formed positive bonds with the staff and with each other, which offers the children consistency and stability. The children's health needs are met and they have access to a wide range of meaningful activities. The staff encourage the children to develop their own hobbies and interests, and group outings are chosen and planned by the children. This way of working promotes the children's choices and their involvement in how they spend their leisure time.

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

The home operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying that is understood by the staff and the children. The staff teach the children about empathy and the effect of bullying, which develops the children's tolerance levels and reduces bullying incidents. There are no concerns about the current children going missing from the home. The staff regularly talk to the children about staying safe in their local community. This increases the children's awareness of stranger danger.

The staff deliver positive behaviour management with good outcomes. They use rewards and incentives to encourage good behaviour and use restorative approaches to educate the children when they misbehave. Restraints are rarely used and are only implemented as a last resort. These behaviour management strategies improve the children's social skills.

A line of enquiry regarding keeping safe while online emerged during the inspection. This led to concerns about how e-safety is managed, and how well the manager and the staff understand the risks of online bullying and exploitation.

A safeguarding incident regarding e-safety recently occurred and was not adequately managed in line with safeguarding procedures. The staff acted at the time of the incident by removing a child's mobile telephone and tablet, which reduced the immediate risk to the child. However, the staff did not fully recognise or understand other potential e-safety risks. This suggests that the staff did not fully understand the wide range of potential risks that children may be exposed to when they are online.

There was a delay in informing the placing authority of what had occurred, and in developing a multi-agency approach to keep the child and other children safe. This lack of action and foresight potentially compromises the children's welfare.

The manager was unable to provide a record of the current and previous child-protection events or the actions taken in response. There are no central child-protection records in the home. Child-protection records are stored electronically on individual children's records. However, due to inputting errors the manager could not provide a full chronology of a specific event that was identified as a key line of enquiry at this inspection. Poor access to safeguarding records potentially compromises the children's safety.

An inspection of the staff recruitment files was not possible because the relevant documentation was not available in the home. The manager explained that all recruitment information is stored electronically at the provider's head office, and that this information could not be accessed after 4.30pm. Additional information about staffing, as described in schedule 2 of The Children's Homes Regulations 2015, was also not available. Not having required documentation available in the home could potentially

compromise the children's safety and their welfare, should this information be required for safeguarding purposes.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager is an experienced practitioner who has the necessary qualifications to undertake her role, but she has failed to register with Ofsted. This shortfall means that the regulatory body is unable to assess her suitability for the role. The home has been without a manager who is registered for a considerable period of time.

Following the last inspection, there has been a shortfall in staffing levels. The lack of staff has had a negative impact on staff morale. Staff reported that they have been working long hours and overtime, and that they feel tired. The manager has been regularly covering staff shifts, which has reduced her office time and consequently the time that she has available to carry out her managerial role. This has affected the operation of the home and the outcomes for children.

The current statement of purpose is out of date and includes incorrect information. For example, the previous registered manager's details are recorded despite her no longer working at the home. Additionally, in the safeguarding section of the statement, the list of people who need to be informed of child-protection concerns is significantly outdated. Incorrect information can potentially mislead social workers and other professionals who are looking for suitable placements.

The manager has good day-to-day oversight of the home and the children who are living there. She has high aspirations and strives to operate a happy environment. This is not reflected in the monitoring of the home, in particular in the manager's Regulation 45 monitoring report. The views of the children, staff, parents and relevant professionals are not included. This is a missed opportunity to consider their views in order to improve the home's performance.

The manager adopts a child-focused approach and she is a very good advocate for the children and the staff. She has developed good relationships with other professionals, which has improved the children's access to services. The staff feel that they are supported by the manager, and that she operates 'an open-door policy'.

The home has progressed by meeting three recommendations from the last inspection. Improvements have been made in how the children's risk assessments are written. The supervision of staff is better planned, and includes discussions around safeguarding children. The staff are actively working towards providing some of the children's records in a child-friendly format. This is with a view to the children becoming more involved in their planning and decision-making.

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: SC391993

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: St Cuthbert's Care

Registered provider address: St Cuthbert's House, West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne
NE15 7PY

Responsible individual: Sheila Schweppe

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Debbie White: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019