

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 owned and managed by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide care for up to six children who may have social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 21 October 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 July 2021

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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 August 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/08/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
24/07/2018	Full	Good
22/08/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making progress because of the care they receive from the staff. One social worker said, '[Child's name] has come on leaps and bounds, considering what is going on in their little world.' Children have made positive relationships with staff. This enables the children to have a secure base, which allows them to flourish in the environment around them.

Staff help the children to lead healthy lifestyles. Children eat a balanced diet and take part in physical activities, such as walking and bike rides. The registered manager makes referrals to mental health services for the children if or when they need this specialist support. Staff support the children to attend their routine health appointments. This helps children to understand the benefits of looking after their health needs. One social worker said, 'Staff have helped [child's name] manage their weight. They are now much happier and healthier.'

Children attend education and are making good progress. One child recently moved to an alternative school so that their educational needs could be met. As a result, this child has developed their reading and writing skills, and there is a significant improvement in their speech and language. Consequently, the child has grown in confidence and they are proud of their achievements.

Children like being around staff; they have fun together and enjoy each other's company. This gives children a secure attachment base. For example, one child seeks out staff for a hug before they leave the home for the day. Children take part in a wide range of leisure activities. They have opportunities to develop new hobbies and interests, and this encourages the development of their social skills.

Staff support contact between children and their families when this is needed. They appreciate how important these relationships are to children. This support helps children to understand their backgrounds, identity and experiences.

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

Protecting children from harm and managing risks to their safety is the focus of daily routines in the home. However, to manage potential risks, all children's bedrooms are alarmed. For some children, the use of these alarms is unnecessary and intrusive. This creates an institutionalised environment for children and not a homely experience.

Staff carry out tailored key-work sessions with the children. These support children to reflect on aspects of growing up, including taking age-appropriate risks and keeping themselves safe. This work also helps children to learn what a safe and positive relationship looks like and feels like, and encourages their self-awareness of unhealthy or harmful relationships.

Safe practice and forward thinking from staff helps to reduce incidents. Staff are aware of the triggers to children's behaviours. They devise bespoke plans to reduce and manage children's anxieties and frustrations. For example, the registered manager has put a holiday contingency plan in place for one child. This means that the child can return to the home if they are struggling with the change in environment. This approach supports the child's individual needs, giving them the chance to join in activities, but also provides the child with the security of being able to return home if they need to or want to.

Children's risk assessments reflect their individual needs and vulnerabilities. These documents are detailed and provide staff with guidance on the strategies to use to manage and reduce risks to children's safety. The registered manager regularly reviews children's risk assessments and updates these following any incidents. This means that staff have clear strategies to follow to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Safer recruitment processes ensure that staff are appropriately vetted before they start to work with the children. There is a 12-week induction programme in place where new starters are mentored by managers and senior staff. Strengths and areas of development are identified and these are recorded in individual induction plans. This approach ensures that children only work with suitable staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has high aspirations for the children and leads by example. She is fully aware of the strengths of the service and the areas for development. Staff practice reflects the high standard set by the registered manager and there is a shared ethos of providing children with bespoke care and support to meet their individual needs.

The monitoring systems in place help the registered manager to review children's safety and progress, consider the quality of children's records and case files, and determine the safety of the environment. These measures ensure that the care that children receive continues to meet their needs.

The registered manager works in partnership with children's social workers and other professionals, and advocates well for children. This ensures that children are listened to and that their views and wishes are considered. However, the statutory care plans for some children are not up to date. The registered manager has not escalated this shortfall to senior managers in the local authority. As a result, some of the information contained in children's case files is inaccurate. This does not provide children with an accurate account of their progress.

Staff are well supported in their role and benefit from regular and reflective formal supervision. This means that staff practice is evaluated and reviewed to ensure that it meets children's needs. The registered manager ensures that staff receive training

and can access learning opportunities that support their development. Consequently, staff have the skills that they need to provide children with good care and support.

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 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. (Regulation 24 (1)(a))	28 August 2021
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; and are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))	28 August 2021

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: SC391993

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: St Cuthbert's Care

Registered provider address: St. Cuthberts House, West Road, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 7PY

Responsible individual: Amanda Head

Registered manager: Amy Ward

Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

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