

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 have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The registered manager is currently on planned leave. The deputy manager has been acting as the manager since May 2018.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 22 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2017	Full	Good
23/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
05/07/2016	Full	Good
08/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- The relevant plan may include a strategy for a particular type of care, treatment or intervention (for example therapy relating to neglect or abuse). The care staff will need to understand the purpose of any such care and the way in which the past experiences of abuse or neglect may manifest itself in the day to day life of the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.15)

In particular, strategies in young people's residential care plans and risk assessments should be explicitly clear. They should read in a way that is helpful for the young person.

- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home, so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

In particular, safeguarding should be added as a stand-alone agenda item in staff supervisions and team meetings.

- Some records may be kept electronically (Regulation 38), provided that this information can be easily accessible by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. In particular, transfer of records to electronic formats is carried out in a timely manner to avoid any unnecessary impact upon case records. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 14.2)

In particular, the manager should develop a system that makes it easy to link documentation to track young people's progress.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are making progress in most areas of their lives, taking into account their starting points. The acting manager and the staff team ensure that the young people receive safe and consistent care. The young people quickly build and maintain trusting relationships with the adults who care for them. The staff team knows the young people well and helps promote their interests and likes.

The staff team ensures that the young people have a positive experience following their admission. Young people are sensitively welcomed into the home. This helps young people to settle.

Young people's views are sought in a variety of ways. Regular house meetings allow young people to contribute to their care. Young people's views are listened to and acted on. The acting manager recognises the importance for some young people to have pets. There are currently pet hamsters and rabbits in the home. This provides young people with opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility.

There are communal areas in the home that are well used by the young people and the staff team. Young people enjoy watching movies and playing in the games room. Young people equally enjoy the organised activities in the community. This includes gym memberships, visits to museums, theme parks and water parks. Young people ask to spend time with members of staff going for walks and bike rides. This helps to strengthen the relationships that the young people build with the staff team.

Young people are supported to have contact with family and friends where it is safe to do so. The staff team remains in contact with the young people and makes welfare calls to them during that period. This is to support the arrangements and ensure that this is a positive experience for the young people.

Education and attainment are well supported. The acting manager has good links to virtual head teachers in education. When young people have no identified educational placement, alternative arrangements are put in place. This is likely to support reintegration into education.

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

There is a good understanding of young people's individual vulnerabilities. Risk assessments are robust and identify strategies to mitigate risk of harm. Residential care plans and risk assessments could be strengthened by writing them in a way that helps young people to understand how they will be supported.

There is good evidence that young people are effectively safeguarded at this home. Staff follow safeguarding procedures in line with individual risk assessments. Safeguarding incidents are dealt with swiftly to avoid escalation of risk. For example, the acting manager contacted the 'Prevent' team to support a young person where there were potential concerns regarding radicalisation.

Key-worker sessions and young people's meetings evidence the proactive ways that the staff team helps young people to stay safe. Topics explored include racism, radicalisation, knowing their rights and keeping safe online.

Missing from home episodes have significantly reduced for the young people currently living in the home. When young people have gone missing from the home, the correct procedures have been followed. The staff team actively looks for young people, to ensure their safe return home. When young people return, they are welcomed sensitively and provided with opportunities to speak with an independent visitor. A professional commented, 'You cannot fault the staff, they are fantastic. They care about the young people and make sure they are safe. There should be more homes like this.'

The young people respond well to the clear boundaries in the home. There is a consistent approach to meeting the young people's needs. Consequently, physical interventions are rare.

There have been bullying incidents within the home. All incidents are taken seriously and responded to in an appropriate way. Young people are helped to understand the impact of bullying, to help disrupt negative behaviours.

When sanctions are used, they are proportionate and fair. This is supported by some of the young people's comments.

To strengthen safeguarding practice in the home, safeguarding should be added as a stand-alone agenda item in staff supervisions and team meetings.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The deputy manager is currently acting as the home's manager. She started this position in May 2018. The registered manager is currently on planned extended leave. The transition and change of management has been smooth and without issues. The acting manager is appropriately qualified and experienced for the position held. With the support of a dedicated staff team, the acting manager has ensured that the home continues to meet the aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose.

Staff members reported that they feel supported by the acting manager. One member of staff has been supported back to work following sickness leave. There is also a new member of staff. He has received a planned induction to the service. The acting manager ensures that supervisions and appraisals are completed regularly. Supervisions provide the staff team with opportunities to reflect on practice. They also support professional development.

The acting manager is hardworking and leads by example. The staff team and young people find her approachable. She is well organised, efficient and effective in her management style. She is clear on the home's strengths as well as areas that can be further developed. She welcomed feedback from the inspector to drive improvements forward.

The acting manager has a very good understanding of the young people's needs and advocates well on their behalf. She is appropriate in her challenge of other professionals. This is evident where there have been shortfalls in the expected quality of care provided to young people.

The acting manager has ensured that mandatory training is up to date. She now plans to extend the training programme to cover issues that link to the individual needs of the young people. She has sourced training around radicalisation so that members of the staff team become knowledgeable and skilled in this area.

The acting manager has maintained good relationships with a network of professionals. Feedback from professionals is positive and indicates that the acting manager is quick to discuss relevant issues and ask for additional services that will benefit the young people.

Young people's records are held both electronically and on paper files. The electronic system is impressive. However, the two systems are not yet fully compatible. During the inspection, some records were not easily accessible to the inspector. Some documents could not be linked to track outcomes and progress for young people. To improve practice in this area the acting manager should devise an effective system that links documents, making them easily accessible.

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 Errington

Registered manager: Katie Doyle

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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