

SC036726

Nottinghamshire County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care for up to 12 children with sensory impairment, learning disabilities, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or physical disabilities. There are currently four children living at the home.

Inspection date: 26 November 2020

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit took place because Ofsted has been made aware of concerns about the management of the home, the quality of care provided to children and staff conduct.

The inspector was aware during this visit that child protection allegations were being investigated by the appropriate authorities. While Ofsted does not have the power to investigate allegations of this kind, actions taken by the setting in response to the allegations were considered alongside other evidence available at the time of the visit to inform the inspector's judgements.

Poor practice had developed among the staff team. This had gone unnoticed or unchallenged by the management team.

Medication systems are poor. There have been errors in the administration, storage and recording of children's medication. In some cases, these errors had potentially very serious consequences. For example, weaknesses in practice resulted in a child who has regular seizures not having access to emergency seizure medication when on an outing.

Staff have not referred unexplained marks and bruises to appropriate professionals in line with the home's safeguarding procedures. As a result, opportunities to investigate potential safeguarding concerns have been missed.

Children's behaviour has not always been managed appropriately by staff. Children who have complex disabilities, and who are very vulnerable, have not always been treated with kindness and respect. In addition, poor decision-making by staff when managing the behaviour of children has resulted in children being placed at risk of harm.

Recent safeguarding incidents have not been referred to Ofsted as they should have been. This has limited the ability of Ofsted to carry out its regulatory functions.

Senior managers within the organisation have identified the shortfalls themselves during a detailed audit of the home's operation. Once the shortfalls were known to them, they made sure that safeguarding procedures were followed. They have implemented an urgent improvement plan. Although examples of poor practice are still apparent, managers are now recognising and responding to these issues.

Senior managers have put together a new management team in the home. They have also reduced the number of children living in the home from eight to four. These actions address immediate safety concerns.

Leaders are making appropriate decisions. Some members of staff whose practice is under review are no longer working directly with children. Others are working under the close supervision of the new management team. Staffing shortages are further exacerbated by the fact that several staff are self-isolating in accordance with COVID-19 (coronavirus) guidelines. The staffing situation is unstable. This impacts of the consistency of care provided to children.

Some agency staff have not received enough induction or specific training to provide high-quality care to children with such complex needs.

Requirements made at the assurance visit on 30 September have not been fully assessed during this visit. These are carried forward to be reviewed at the next visit.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/10/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/06/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
01/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/01/2018	Full	Outstanding

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
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))</p> <p>This relates to the need for the manager to scrutinise significant events to check that staff members are keeping children safe.</p>	1 December 2020
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b))</p> <p>This relates to making sure the members of the staff team work cohesively together to protect children and to promote a positive safeguarding culture.</p>	1 December 2020

<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c))</p> <p>This relates to agency staff who have not received sufficient induction or training.</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi))</p> <p>This relates to the appropriate escalation of concerns about children's welfare when they are identified.</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>

<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home.</p> <p>In particular the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child; and</p> <p>a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1) (2)(b)(c))</p> <p>This relates to recent medication errors and the need to make sure that children have access to any rescue medicines that they might require.</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p> <p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child—</p> <p>is instigated; or</p> <p>concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))</p> <p>This relates to recent events concerning children's safety which Ofsted has not been made aware of.</p>	<p>1 December 2020</p>

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC036726

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Registered provider address: Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

Responsible individual: Devon Allen

Registered manager: Linda Simmons

Inspector

Caroline Brailsford, 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 <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020