

# SC035409

**Northumberland County Council**

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## **Information about this children's home**

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Department for Education to restrict children and young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 15 children who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides care for children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any child under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

The commissioning of health services in this home is the statutory responsibility of NHS England under the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted on 30 September 2014.

**Inspection date:** 7 January 2021

## **This monitoring visit**

An assurance visit carried out on 16 to 19 November 2020 found that there were serious failings impacting on the care, well-being and safety of children. As a result, compliance notices were issued. The purpose of this visit was to assess the home's compliance with the notices served.

This visit found that the home has taken appropriate actions to ensure that the compliance notices are fully met and that practice has improved to ensure that increasingly safe and good-quality care is provided to children.

Children's risk assessments now contain all known risks and the actions required to be taken by staff to reduce or eliminate those risks. The documents are individualised and no longer generic. Regular reviews and updates are carried out by staff and are overseen by managers to ensure that they remain relevant. Staff

understand the risks to children and how to implement the risk assessments to help keep children safe.

Managers have ensured that staff understand and can implement the home's safeguarding procedures and understand the legal criteria for carrying out physical restraint with a child. Staff have received training and ongoing briefings to consolidate their knowledge and understanding of these key issues of childcare practice. Managers have tested the knowledge and understanding of the staff by attending daily handover meetings and working through scenarios. Relevant information and guidance has now been provided to all staff for their reference.

When physical restraint is used by staff, it is now carried out in line with regulations. The registered manager and responsible individual have strengthened the arrangements for the review of physical restraint practice to ensure that staff practice is appropriate. In addition, the responsible individual has met with the managers from the provider's other services who regularly visit the secure children's home, to provide an independent monitoring role. These managers have received guidance and direction so that they now understand the action they must take if they have any concerns about practice at the home.

Managers have implemented a thorough monitoring system to ensure that staff are carrying out welfare checks on children who spend time alone, day or night. The system ensures adherence to children's risk assessments, that practice is helping to keep children safe, and that action can be taken if any shortfalls are found.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/11/2019	Full	Good
04/07/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/12/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/07/2018	Full	Good

## **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:** SC035409

**Provision sub-type:** Secure Unit

**Registered provider:** Northumberland County Council

**Registered provider address:** County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 2EF

**Responsible individual:** Karen MacDonald

**Registered manager:** Julie Tinkler

## **Inspector**

Shaun Common, Senior Officer, Secure Estate

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](mailto: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](http://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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2021