

SC034210

North Yorkshire County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a local authority. The home provides pre-planned short breaks in a residential setting to children who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities and associated complex healthcare needs. The home can also provide extended and bespoke packages of care.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2016.

Inspection date: 11 March 2021

This monitoring visit

Ofsted has paused assurance visits at this time because of the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic. This monitoring visit was carried out in response to increasing concerns identified through safeguarding notifications regarding the management of allegations. The focus of this visit was to review significant incidents and associated documents and records.

Ofsted last inspected the home on 17 December 2019 when it completed a full inspection. This monitoring visit was completed off site. The inspector used video and phone calls, emails and other technology to review records and documents. The inspector also spoke with children, when possible, and their families, observed children's interactions with staff, interviewed staff and relevant professionals, and reviewed a pre-recorded virtual tour of the home.

The staff take all allegations of harm seriously and they ensure that the children are listened to. Procedures to guide staff regarding the management and referral of allegations are clear. Practice is further strengthened by ongoing discussions with the designated officer for the local authority. In some situations, there has been a short delay in staff notifying managers and the designated officer about allegations. Although delays have been brief and there has been no negative effect on children from this, these delays can impact on the timeliness of decision-making by managers

and external agencies. This may leave children in a situation of possible risk for longer than they should be.

The registered manager's thorough oversight means that all allegations are investigated. Appropriate and proportionate action is taken by the management team in response to allegations or statements made by children. Careful and considered decision-making ensures that the children's complex health and care needs continue to be met when safeguarding measures are implemented. For example, this may mean that, in some circumstances, staff with specialist medical skills continue to work with individual children for a short period of time. This is under the direct supervision of managers or other staff. However, on these occasions, the rationale for these decisions is not always clearly reflected in children's records.

External monitoring of this home by the independent person does not provide an overarching view of the children's journey and lived experiences. The evaluative reports are routinely completed, but the level of consultation with children and others fluctuates. Consequently, children's views do not shape the continual development of the service. Significantly, the independent person continues to complete visits remotely, despite this flexibility having now been removed from the amended regulations. This further prevents children's views from informing the development of the home.

The staff have the knowledge and skills to support the individual needs of the children. They also complete specific training linked to the primary care and protection of children who have physical and/or learning disabilities. This means that children benefit from a seamless extension of their usual daily routines during their short break.

Parents report that the home is 'amazing' and that the staff go above and beyond for their children. One parent said, 'My child can express his discontent, but all I see when he has planned respite is pure excitement.' During this monitoring visit, children were observed to enjoy their time at the home and have positive relationships with staff.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/09/2018	Full	Outstanding
23/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
02/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34 (1)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that staff consistently implement this policy.</p>	7 May 2021
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must ensure that children's risk assessments include details of all decisions made and actions taken to protect children from harm.</p>	7 May 2021
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>When the independent person is carrying out a visit, the registered person must help the independent person—</p> <p>if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires; and</p> <p>to inspect the premises of the home and such of the home's records (except for a child's case records, unless the child and the child's placing authority consent) as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (1) (2)(a)(b))</p>	7 May 2021

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: SC034210

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Yorkshire County Council

Registered provider address: North Yorkshire County Council, County Hall,
Northallerton DL7 8AD

Responsible individual: Karl Podmore

Registered manager: Katherine Clarke

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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