

# SC034210

Registered provider: North Yorkshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed 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 home is divided into two separate homes Nidderdale and Beck House.

The registered manager is in day-to-day charge of the home. She has been registered with Ofsted since May 2016.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021. We last visited this setting on 11 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

### Inspection dates: 9 and 10 March 2022

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>good</b>
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

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

**Date of last inspection:** 17 December 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## 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

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

The short-break service provides children with the opportunity to enjoy activities and gain experiences that may otherwise not be available to them. Throughout the pandemic, staff used the vast quantity of resources in the home and garden to create fun-filled and stimulating activities. Themed areas of sensory play are incorporated within the garden.

In addition to the short-breaks provision, the staff provide care for children from within the local authority who need looking after on an emergency basis. While children await their planned move to a suitable long-term placement, education becomes an integral aspect of the child's care needs. Children are choosing to complete their education as their schoolwork is bespoke and created in line with their interests and outcomes.

Children have a range of complex health needs. The staff routinely receive training and guidance to enable them to provide better care for children, for example epilepsy training. Children with epilepsy can experience seizures during their stays and this can be a worrying time for children and their families. Seizure plans are a tool used by staff to keep children safe and healthy. However, the recovery plan needs developing to ensure that children consistently receive staff comfort and reassurance after any seizure activity.

Children communicate in their own specific way. For some children, this includes the use of communication aids. Staff take immediate action if children arrive without their aids. Staff understand the impact on children if they are unable to make choices and share their wishes and feelings. Communication resources continue to be developed to enable children to have greater involvement in the decisions about their care.

The strength of the measures put in place by the manager has helped to protect the children and staff from COVID-19 infections during the pandemic. It is a testament that they continued to provide a service to the most vulnerable families during the most restrictive periods of the pandemic.

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

The manager ensures that staff are trained and confident before they can provide personal care for children. Children are treated with dignity and respect. The staff routinely provide reasoning, reassurance and an opportunity for the child to take control of this element of their care. Any injury or bruising identified on a child is recorded on a body-map record; however, there is a delay in the senior staff reviewing the compiled body maps.

Children with varying needs and mobility are placed together for their breaks. Availability of beds across the two homes has been restricted by the emergency

placement of children. Children who use mobility aids share their communal space with other children who have bundles of energy. Staff supervision does not consistently prevent children from displaying potentially injurious behaviours.

Medication procedure errors impact on the health and well-being of children. Lessons have been learned and further training and guidance has been provided for staff. Only staff who have specific experience and training are permitted to administer medication to children. However, not all staff have completed the necessary training, and this shortfall has left staff administering controlled medication to children in isolation. This means that the administration of controlled medication is not in line with children's risk assessments. An error involving controlled medication could have significant impact.

Children's complex trauma can present in their behavioural and emotional responses. Children receive psychological support to try and find strategies that may help. Staff use physical restraint to protect children and staff from harm. The methods used are the least restrictive, with continual reassurance being given to the child. The manager has oversight of all incidents. This approach helps children to feel safe and secure during periods of crisis.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The home is managed by a passionate, experienced and stable senior leadership team. The staff talk highly about the guidance and support that they receive. As a team, staff continue to explore ways to improve the experiences of children. The staff's creativity and ideas are embraced by the manager.

The manager has high aspirations for children. She is ambitious and has similar high expectations of her staff team. The manager will not accept substandard practice. The manager provides routine practice direction and guidance to the staff, which is strengthened by policies and procedures. The manager has clear expectations of practice performance and will take immediate action to address any deficits. Importantly, the manager learns from these incidents and implements training and guidance for the staff.

The recruitment of staff has been a challenge. The manager's focus is to appoint high-calibre and confident staff. The staff members spoken to were highly motivated, felt very supported and enjoyed their roles. Currently, agency and casual staff are being used to support the team. All staff are subject to safer recruitment checks, but their files do not routinely provide evidence of qualifications that are pertinent to their role.

Partnership working is effective and there is regular consultation with parents, carers and professionals. The excellent relationships ensure that the children receive the best possible care and experiences. There is a high level of parental satisfaction. A parent said, 'They go above and beyond, the staff are absolutely fantastic and the care they provide my son is second to none. He is getting the opportunity to go horse riding and swimming, which he absolutely loves.'

The manager is striving to continue to improve the service and outcomes for children. She advocates for children to ensure that they are routinely receiving the services they need. The manager ensures that children are consulted with and their wishes heard. This means that children are involved in decisions about their care and how they spend their time in the home.

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; and</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b))</p>	5 May 2022
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	5 May 2022

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that as set out in regulations 31-33, they are responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are appropriately skilled to care for the children accessing the short-breaks provision and understand that safeguards may need to be greater than for other children. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.20)

### 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:** SC034210

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** North Yorkshire County Council

**Registered provider address:** County Hall, Northallerton DL7 8AD

**Responsible individual:** James Cliffe

**Registered manager:** Katherine Clarke

## Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, Social Care Inspector

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