

# 1155757

Registered provider: Northumberland County Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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

This home is operated and managed by a local authority to provide care for up to two children who may have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2015.

The inspector spoke to the two children who live in the home.

**Inspection date:** 1 February 2023

## **This monitoring visit**

Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit on 7 December 2022 and identified significant breaches in regulations, which placed children at risk of harm.

Ofsted issued four compliance notices under regulations 12, 13, 14 and 32 to address the concerns relating to the protection of children and the widespread failings in the leadership and management arrangements of the home. In addition, an urgent notice to vary the conditions of registration was issued to reduce the number of children living in the home from three to two.

This visit was carried out to monitor the action that has been taken by the provider in response to the compliance notices. The inspector found that, since the last inspection, the provider has taken significant action to improve the service. All compliance notices have been met. However, regulation 14 has been reissued in part as a requirement.

The frequency of staff meetings has improved. Safeguarding is prioritised, with the sharing of children's known risks and unsafe behaviours. Staff now have a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities and understand what they are expected to do to keep children safe.

The registered manager has ensured that all staff working in the children's home have completed the provider's mandatory training. Furthermore, the registered

manager has reviewed staffing rotas to ensure that there are sufficient experienced and skilled staff available to meet the identified needs of the children. Because of this, children's experiences of living in this home are improving.

The registered manager has ensured that all staff who are responsible for caring for the children are trained in the home's agreed model of physical intervention. As a result, the staff are confident, and they have the appropriate knowledge and skills to support the children safely in accordance with their relevant plans.

The registered manager has reviewed the supervision procedures in the home. All staff, including agency staff, now receive regular supervision sessions in line with the provider's supervision policy. All staff are now provided with protected time to reflect on the progress and experiences of children. This practice benefits the children due to the continuity of care that they receive.

The registered manager has improved the safer recruitment processes for all staff, including agency staff, working in the children's home. The registered manager has implemented a monitoring system to ensure that all staff have been suitably vetted before they work with the children. As a result, children are better protected from harm.

Managers have worked hard to ensure that staff understand and work with the home's child protection and safeguarding policies. This means that children are well cared for and feel safer.

The registered manager has an admission process in place. This assesses the suitability and needs of any new children moving into the home, and the impact that this may have on the other children who already live in the home. The responsible individual also ensures that the views and opinions of the registered manager, children and staff are taken into consideration before any child moves into the home.

Senior leaders have accepted responsibility for their decision-making in the past that had placed children at significant risk of harm. However, further assurance is needed from senior leaders to ensure that assessments by those who are responsible for the day-to-day care and arrangements of the children are fully considered before any new children move into the home.

The requirements that were previously issued under regulations 11, 24, 35, 36, 40 and 44 were not reviewed during this visit. For this reason, they are reissued.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/06/2022	Full	Good
25/01/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
10/09/2019	Full	Requires improvement to be good
30/05/2018	Full	Good

## 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 care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and</p> <p>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to senior leaders embedding systems that consider the assessments by those responsible for the day-to-day care and arrangements for the children.</p>	28 March 2023
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust;</p> <p>an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and</p> <p>positive responses to other children and adults.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;</p> <p>de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(i)(x)(xi))</p>	28 March 2023

<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if—</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children;</p> <p>the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance;</p> <p>so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and</p> <p>the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (1)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	28 March 2023
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out—</p> <p>how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and</p> <p>the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (1)(a)(b) (3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))</p>	28 March 2023
<p>The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—</p>	28 March 2023

<p>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child;</p> <p>are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b))</p> <p>This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that the children's looked after review documents and personal education plan meeting documents are obtained and kept up to date.</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.</p> <p>A notification made under this regulation—</p> <p>must include details of—</p> <p>the matter;</p> <p>the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and</p> <p>any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter;</p> <p>must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))</p>	<p>28 March 2023</p>

<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1) (4)(a)(b) (7)(a))</p>	<p>28 March 2023</p>
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## 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:** 1155757

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

**Registered provider:** Northumberland County Council

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

**Responsible individual:** Adam Hall

**Registered manager:** Stephanie Scott

## **Inspector**

Claire Webster, Social Care Inspector



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