

1233307

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates and manages this home. The home is registered to provide care for up to six children with emotional and social needs.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2021.

Two children are currently living in the home. The inspector spoke to one child who was in the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 12 and 13 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 17 May 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2022	Full	Requires improvement to be good
16/11/2021	Full	Good
17/02/2020	Full	Good
04/02/2019	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have opportunities to develop good, caring relationships with the people who look after them. This ensures that children have someone to talk to.

Staff continue to support the children when they move out of the home. Young adults, who have previously lived in the home, keep in touch with staff and share their progress. This gives children an ongoing network of support into adulthood.

Staff use different communication methods with children. Those children with learning needs have information shared with them through pictures. Staff help children to understand information in ways that are personal to them.

Children know how to make a complaint. During the inspection, one child complained about something that had happened. This was taken seriously and is being dealt with by the manager. Children's views are important and listened to.

Staff support the children with their education. Alternatives are in place when children cannot go to school or college. Staff also provide learning experiences in the home. For example, there is an allotment in the garden. Children can learn about plants and how to grow vegetables. This gives opportunities to develop children's knowledge in other areas.

Staff support children to attend important health appointments. Children also have access to specialist services when needed. Sometimes children can be resistant to accepting professional support, but staff provide encouragement so that children get the help they need.

A high number of children have moved in and out of the home since the last inspection. Reasons for this vary, such as some children needing to live in a smaller home. Others have moved on to independence.

When children have moved into the home in an emergency, this has limited the time available for planning. At times, the mix of children has been challenging. A more planned admissions process is now in place. This makes sure that staff can meet the needs of the children individually and as a group. This will help to lessen unnecessary moves for children.

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

Children sometimes put themselves in risky situations, such as going missing. Staff understand their safeguarding responsibilities and work to keep children safe and reduce the risk of harm.

Before moving into the home, the manager completes a risk assessment for each child. This informs the children's safety plans. These plans are thorough, and staff have a good understanding of the children's needs. However, for one child, their safety plan did not include all their known risks. This means that staff may not be aware of essential information to help keep children safe.

The children's individualised risk assessments detail the issues for children. This includes triggers for behaviour and what is likely to happen. There are also clear actions that staff should take. Each child has a key worker. This member of staff helps children understand their risky behaviour and encourages them to make safer decisions.

Children frequently go missing from the home. When this happens, staff know what to do. The staff make many efforts to find children, including going out into the community to look for them. Staff have received refresher training about missing from home, enhancing their knowledge and skills. There is a well-coordinated response with other services, such as the police. The manager escalates concerns to social care professionals when needed. Strategy meetings take place to plan the next steps for children. All these actions aim to return children home as soon as possible when they do go missing, to reduce the risk of harm to children.

Staff rarely need to use physical intervention to keep children safe. Staff prefer to use a positive approach such as de-escalation, diversion or humour. Rewards and consequences are also used. This helps provide children with strategies to manage their emotions and behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has high aspirations for the children and wants the best for them. He also understands the staff team's strengths, challenges and weaknesses. The manager's long-term vision is to develop the team further through training. This also includes providing the staff with more knowledge about the impact of a child's past trauma. This will broaden the team's skills, helping with its care of the children.

There is a stable staff team that cares for the children. They are knowledgeable about the children and their needs. Staff are supportive of one another. They also speak highly of the leadership team. Reflective supervision takes place, and there is evidence of managers challenging staff's practice. This helps staff to improve their care of the children.

The manager advocates for the children, and challenges are made to the local authority about future planning. This is particularly important for children who are approaching independence. This gives children time to adjust and to receive the support they need to move on from the home when they are ready.

The staff team works well with external professionals. For example, advice from a psychologist helps staff with their approach. Staff have opportunities to talk through

challenging situations. Staff reflect on alternative ways to deal with things. This gives children the care they need in a way that can help them with past experiences.

There are some shortfalls with the monitoring of the paperwork. This has resulted in some inconsistencies in the staff's recording. For example, the detail in the missing chronologies varies. It is not always clear whether debriefs have happened with children, and the manager has not always signed records to confirm his oversight. Handover meetings are happening daily, sharing essential information between staff. However, there are no written records to capture this important process and the discussions held.

The manager has completed a review of the home to look at the quality of care provided to children. This was not sent to Ofsted, so the regulator was not able to understand the care given to children and their views following the previous inspection.

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, The 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, the registered manager must make sure that all risks from the impact risk assessment are included in the safety planning document for children.</p>	20 July 2023
<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>In particular, the registered manager must ensure his oversight is formally recorded, that staff's recording is consistent, especially in the missing-from-care chronologies, and that daily handover meetings are properly recorded.</p>	20 July 2023

<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1) (4)(a))</p>	<p>31 July 2023</p>
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Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that admissions only occur as set out in the guidance. This is due to previous concerns raised about the mix of children in the home and whether staff have been able to meet their competing needs, although this has been addressed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6)

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: 1233307

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Newcastle City Council

Registered provider address: Newcastle Civic Centre, Barras Bridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear NE1 8QH

Responsible individual: Liz Spaven

Registered manager: Reinder Dam

Inspector

Miriam Dolman, Social Care Inspector

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