

Kyloe House

Registered provider: Northumberland County Council

Registered provider address: Netherton Park Children's Home, Stannington, Morpeth, Northumberland NE61 6DE

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this secure children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict children's liberty.

The home can accommodate up to 15 children aged between 10 and 17 years. It has three designated living areas: Alder, Willow, and Hadrian. There were 11 children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

The home provides care for children accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities.

The 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 January 2012.

The inspection started on 24 September 2024. The inspectors returned on 19 November to gather additional evidence in line with [Ofsted inspections and visits: deferring, pausing and gathering additional evidence](#) policy.

Inspection dates: 24 to 26 September 2024 and 19 November 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account

good

Children's education and learning good

Children's health good

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

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

Date of last inspection: 28 November 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/11/2023	Full	Good
01/11/2022	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2022	Full	Good
21/09/2021	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This inspection consisted of two separate visits. The second visit was to gather additional evidence and to review the compliance notice that was served after the initial visit. This notice was in relation to children being managed away from their peers for longer periods of time than necessary. This was because of children being expected to complete set work before being allowed to return to the group. Suitable action has been taken to meet the compliance notice.

Staff quickly build positive relationships with the children. They are nurturing and attentive, and they provide children with consistent care. This helps children to build their resilience and to recognise that the adults around them genuinely care about their welfare and progress. Feedback from other professionals also emphasises the positive relationships and how these support children's development.

Children said that they like living at the home and that they enjoy spending time with staff. Their social skills and confidence grow because of the new leisure activities they experience. Staff keenly support children's hobbies and interests through the numerous activities that are available. These include accessing a wealth of sports pursuits, arts, crafts, baking and board games.

Staff listen to and act on children's views, and this is an intrinsic part of everyday life in the home. Through one-to-one sessions, children are encouraged to communicate their wishes and feelings about their care and about the running of the home. These creative sessions are reflective and child focused and help children to recognise that their opinions are important and influential.

Children receive effective support to return to the community. They benefit from individualised and child-focused transition plans. The length of the activities or visits outside of the home is based on children's needs, resilience and well-being. Transition plans are well thought out and include children getting used to the people who will be providing their future care. This increases the likely success of children's next placements.

Children's education and learning: good

Education leaders have addressed the shortfalls identified at the previous inspection. They have good oversight of children's progress across each aspect of their learning, and they know the children very well. However, on occasion, leaders monitor staff compliance to processes rather than considering the impact that improvement actions have on the quality of children's education. Leaders take learning walks to assess the impact of training and development activities. However, they focus too much on monitoring whether teachers adhere to deadlines for updating documentation rather than on improvements to their teaching practices and children's learning experiences.

Leaders provide children with a broad and interesting curriculum that helps them to develop new knowledge and skills. Teachers help children to build on these incrementally over time. They set appropriate individual learning targets to help children focus on their learning and achieve their goals. Children's progress is often significant, taking into account their starting points and the frequent extended periods that they did not attend school when they were in the community. Most children achieve relevant qualifications, including in core subjects, such as English, mathematics, science, and information technology, and this prepares them well for their next steps.

Most children have very high attendance in education. Teachers and support staff use a consistent approach to dealing with children's inappropriate language and behaviour to help children to understand when their behaviour is unacceptable. As a result, children improve their behaviour over time and develop tolerance towards others.

Children benefit from an extensive personal development curriculum taught skilfully in safe and supportive environments. As a result, children manage their emotions and reactions to challenging situations effectively. Children increase their self-esteem and confidence. They develop teamworking and communication skills. Teachers, care staff and therapy staff work closely together to ensure children receive consistent messages.

Teachers promote reading in every lesson. Leaders carefully select books for group reading sessions that consider important personal issues that concern children. Topics include healthy relationships, bereavement and loss, mental health, 'fitting in' and sexual orientation. Leaders rightly acknowledge that there is further work to do to engage all children in reading for pleasure.

Children's health: good

Children have positive health outcomes because health teams persistently advocate for them and ensure that pre-existing referrals are followed up. For example, when children require developmental assessments, the psychology team consults with children's families where relevant. They also contact other services to ensure that coming to live in this home does not delay the assessment process.

Children benefit from access to a skilled, experienced and child-centred team of healthcare staff. Staff work creatively and imaginatively with children to build positive relationships. They understand and know the children's needs extremely well and focus their practice on listening to children to improve their health outcomes.

The health team is accessible to children and is proactive in consulting with them about their physical, emotional and mental health needs. This helps children to thrive. Children's views are recorded in their individual comprehensive health assessment tool and other assessment documents. The health team completes these

records to an exceptionally good standard, ensuring that the information provided is detailed and unambiguous. This is also reflected in formulation plans and in multi-agency team around the child meetings and helps children to understand the progress they have made.

Children have access to staff with the right skills to meet their needs. The healthcare team shares its diverse experience by offering training to the wider staff teams across the home. This includes sessions in Secure Stairs, neurodiversity and developmental language disorder training. This ensures that children receive consistent care and support across all areas of their development.

Children are consistently seen by a member of the health team following a physical restraint or after any incident of self-harm. An appropriate process to ensure that health staff are informed of any incident of managing away has recently been introduced. This helps staff to identify and respond to any physical or mental health needs that children may have following incidents.

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

Leaders and staff understand children's behaviour. They are effective in understanding triggers and in the use of de-escalation techniques. There is independent quality assurance of physical restraint incidents. This ensures that the use of physical restraint is appropriate and proportionate.

Recent improvements to how children are managed away have improved children's experiences. Managers have been thorough in responding to concerns identified at the initial visit, which included approaches that did not fully reflect children's needs or rights. Policies have been revised, staff have been suitably trained and children have been made aware of their rights. There is also improved management oversight that ensures children are managed away from their peers for the minimum time possible.

Staff work well together to safeguard children. Children respond well to the consistent staff approach to behaviour management. Children's dynamic risk assessments are individualised and support the staff in providing trauma-informed care. Children's well-being and safety are further supported throughout the night with appropriate checks that take place in line with the children's risk assessments.

Swift action is taken when there has been an allegation made against a member of staff. Such matters are taken seriously, managed and investigated in the best interests of children and in accordance with procedure. Children are listened to and are informed of the outcome.

Children are encouraged to share any complaints or grumbles, and these are investigated and if required, addressed and acted on. Feedback on the outcome of complaints is given to children, reassuring them that their concerns are taken seriously.

Children are comfortable in their surroundings and enjoy an environment with homely touches. Children's bedrooms are personalised and, depending on risk, are equipped with personal care items, reading materials and other items that keep them entertained. The environment reflects the values and ethos of the home and how children are respected, cared for and protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager and leaders aspire to continually improve the care provided to children. This is evident in the quick and thorough action taken to improve how children are supported when they are separated from their peers. The implementation of a detailed service development plan continues the pathway to improve the care and service provided.

Children benefit from being cared for by a well-supported staff team. Staff receive regular formal and informal supervision. As a result, staff are committed and motivated and say that teamwork and morale are high. Supervision has a focus on staff well-being, care practice, training and development.

Children respond well to receiving consistent care and the implementation of boundaries that help them to feel safer. Multi-disciplinary meetings, staff meetings and leadership meetings, as well as daily shift handovers, are used well in this respect. In addition, all staff across the home are well-trained. Staff receive a thorough induction, mandatory and more specialist training, including recently being retrained in the principles of managing away. This equips staff well to meet the wide-ranging needs of the children who come to live at the home.

The monitoring of the service is thorough. This includes the quality of care provided to the children, education, health and staffing. Children thrive because of the clear expectations of the registered manager and the senior team's promotion of the standard of care to be provided.

The leadership team strongly advocates for children when the placing local authority has not found a suitable placement for them in a timely manner when their secure orders are due to end. This greatly assists and ensures that children have a suitable home to move on to. In addition, staff work closely with social workers and other professionals to ensure that children's needs can be met in the community. For example, by making appointments, sharing information and transferring records to community health services.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children's progress in education can be measured and evidenced in various ways, including, but not limited to, success in academic, vocational and other awards and qualifications. Leaders should ensure that they monitor the impact that improvement actions have on the quality of children's education in addition to monitoring compliance with processes. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.2)

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.'

Secure children's home details

Unique reference number: SC035409

Provision sub-type: Secure Unit

Registered provider: Northumberland County Council

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

Responsible individual: Adam Hall

Registered manager: Julie Tinkler

Inspectors

24 to 26 September 2024

Debbie Foster, Social Care Inspector

Gemma McDonnell, Social Care Inspector

Cath Sikakana, Social Care Inspector

Suzanne Wainwright, His Majesty's Inspector, Further Education and Skills

Sarah Smith, Children's Services Inspector, Care Quality Commission

Shaun Common, His Majesty's Inspector's Quality Assurance Manager

19 November 2024

Paul Scott, Social Care Inspector

Jo Stephenson, Social Care Inspector

Lea Pickerill, Children's Services Inspector, Care Quality Commission

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