

# SC433451

Registered provider: St Cuthbert's Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private provider. It provides care for up to six children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2011.

There were four children living in the home at the time of this inspection.

### Inspection dates: 12 and 13 March 2024

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<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:** 20 February 2023

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
05/10/2021	Full	Good
05/11/2019	Full	Outstanding
14/11/2018	Full	Outstanding

## Inspection judgements

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

The home has experienced change since the last inspection, with children moving into and out of the home. This has naturally been an unsettling time. Children are well supported with personalised care and, as a result, they have made progress from their starting points.

The home is welcoming and well maintained and has a homely atmosphere. Home improvements are well coordinated, and damage caused during incidents is immediately addressed. Children choose the decoration and soft furnishings and how rooms are used. Children's bedrooms and their individual bathrooms are personalised, and they have a comfortable environment.

Consultation with children is of good quality and influences change in the home and the wider organisation. Staff show a genuine interest in the children's opinions, and children have different forums to provide their views. These include group meetings, agenda items in staff team meetings, individual key-worker sessions and events with the organisation's leaders. There is a clear feedback loop showing children how staff have responded to their feedback. This helps children to feel empowered and have some control over their lives.

Children learn about themselves and the world. They are supported to express their views and explore different perspectives. When staff are worried that children may be negatively influenced by others, for example through social media, staff hold open conversations with children and introduce facts and new ideas. This helps broaden children's understanding of different values and belief systems.

Children receive help from staff to maintain positive relationships with family and friends. Staff recognise the importance of these relationships for children and promote them through facilitating family time, welcoming children's friends to the home, hosting regular sleepovers, and taking children and their friends on day trips and on holiday. Staff sensitively help children to understand their family and provide support when relationships are strained or when children experience loss. This helps children to have fun and stay connected to significant people in their lives.

Children's educational attainment and attendance varies. Some children have achieved qualifications and progressed to further education. Other children have experienced absence and exclusions. Staff encourage children to value education and, when barriers to learning emerge, the manager responds appropriately and engages other agencies to formulate a response plan. When other agencies are slow to respond and delay meeting their statutory duties, the manager appropriately escalates this to senior leaders in the child's placing authority.

Staff support children to have a healthier lifestyle. Staff carefully manage sensitive subjects with children, particularly when the topics may embarrass or upset the

child. Staff help children to overcome barriers to seeking medical advice. For some children who were reluctant to attend medical appointments, this support has given them the confidence to access some of the healthcare that they need.

When children move out of the home, staff plan well to support children through the change, helping them to settle into their new home. When the move is to a child's family, staff create a bespoke plan and become an integral part of the child's network of support. They provide outreach work to help parents better understand their child and what may have changed since the parent last cared for them. Staff monitor how children are settling and assist parents when they encounter difficulties. Parents spoke highly of this support, which results in children experiencing positive and secure moves, promoting their continued progress.

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

The manager consistently tracks and monitors risks to children. Individual risk assessments are up to date and reflect the children's needs. Staff consistently follow strategies that are specific and focused on reducing risk. This helps children to be safer.

Risks to children from outside the home are also closely monitored and well understood by staff. Staff can recognise the signs associated with child exploitation and are able to identify changes in children's presentation. Staff share information with other agencies and work in partnership to tackle any concerns. This helps to target and disrupt risks to the children effectively.

Police are never called to the home to manage children's behaviour. When serious behavioural incidents in the home occur, staff intervene appropriately to de-escalate the situation. Staff support the children to learn about the consequences of their behaviour and the impact their actions may have on others. This helps children to better manage their emotions, improve their behaviour and reduce the risk of them being criminalised.

When there are concerns about children's use of technology, staff talk with the children to help them to understand online safety and the potential dangers. With children's consent, their mobile phones are regularly checked by staff and screened for any concerning content. As a result, children learn how to be safer online.

When a child is missing from the home, staff follow protocols and search for the child. Staff liaise with relevant professionals and people known to the child, gathering intelligence to help find the child as soon as possible. Themes and the frequency of missing-from-home episodes are carefully analysed by the manager and used to devise strategies to avoid reoccurrence. When the seriousness of missing-from-home incidents increases, the manager consults relevant professionals and follows necessary procedures.

The manager reviews the home's location risk assessment regularly and identifies most of the community opportunities and risks. However, the impact of the risks to

children and the strategies that staff should follow are not included, and therefore the actions on how these will be addressed is not clear.

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

The home is led by an exceptionally experienced and qualified manager who has created a culture of high standards and child-centred practice. The manager is highly knowledgeable about child development and the impact that adverse childhood experiences have on children. She is innovative and actively looks for ways to improve the quality of children's care and inspire new ways of working. She thinks carefully about change and how this can achieve the greatest positive impact for children.

The manager has an excellent grip on, and understanding of, the children's care and their experiences in the home. She scrutinises all incidents and staff responses to ensure that staff are following procedures and children's care plans. Staff reflect on how they have managed situations through individual debriefs with the manager and as a team. This helps the staff to continually focus on providing the children with high standards of care.

The manager is aspirational for every child who lives at the home, and has highly effective systems to evaluate their experiences. She carries out evidence-based assessments of how the children are doing, and identifies trends and the impact on the child. She works collaboratively with other agencies and strongly advocates for children so that they receive the help that they need to make progress. One professional said, 'You can tell that the staff and manager really want [name of child] to do well.'

Professionals and family members spoke about the excellent communication from managers and staff. Staff attend meetings with the child's network and contribute to decision-making. The manager meticulously follows up on agreed actions, ensuring that children's plans are progressed.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision sessions to enhance safeguarding practice and contribute to their learning and development. The manager and staff work alongside experts to apply a trauma-informed perspective to exploring the children's needs and behaviours. As a result, staff receive clear direction and support to understand complex situations and respond to children's needs effectively.

The manager is confident about challenging issues regarding staff performance. Where shortfalls are identified, these are promptly addressed, taking opportunities for proactive early support. When necessary, this may progress to formal disciplinary processes. This contributes to the home's positive safeguarding culture and results in a continuous drive for high standards in the children's care.

The stable and experienced staff team works well together. Team meetings and staff handovers are effective information-sharing forums. Staff are encouraged to talk about their well-being and how the company can support them, and to identify

training needs. As a result, staff feel valued and committed to the home and turnover is extremely low. This means that children receive care and support from a consistent staff team.

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

### **Recommendation**

- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the home's location and include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location, including strategies for managing these. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

### **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:** SC433451

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

**Registered provider:** St Cuthbert's Care

**Registered provider address:** St. Cuthberts House, West Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne NE15 7PY

**Responsible individual:** Amanda Head

**Registered manager:** Jody Scott

## Inspector

Catherine Heron, His Majesty's Inspector



The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2024