

SC033467

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 run by a charitable organisation and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to eight children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered manager has been in post for five years.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 August 2018

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

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

Date of last inspection: 5 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/09/2017	Full	Good
15/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/08/2016	Full	Good
25/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 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 each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c) and (2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, where there are incidents of bullying, key-worker sessions should take place to educate and support young people to prevent further incidents occurring.</p>	<p>08/09/2018</p>

Recommendations

- Some records may be kept electronically (Regulation 38), provided that this information can be easily accessible by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form.. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 14.2)

In particular, the registered manager should develop a system that makes it easy to link documents to track young people’s progress. Records should be easily accessible to anyone with a legitimate reason to view them.
- The relevant plan may include a strategy for a particular type of care, treatment or intervention (for example therapy relating to neglect or abuse). The care staff will need to understand the purpose of any such care and the way in which the past experiences of abuse or neglect may manifest itself in the day to day life of the child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 16, paragraph 3.15)

In particular, strategies in young people’s residential care plans should be

explicitly clear. They should read in a way that is helpful for the young people.

- Staff skills for safeguarding should include being able to identify signs that children may be at risk, and support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. Staff should encourage children to express their views about whether they feel safe both within and outside the home. Staff should support children to understand how to ask for help to stay safe and that the home is an environment which supports this. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)
In particular, safeguarding should be added as a stand-alone agenda item in team meetings.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

From their starting points, the young people are making progress in most areas of their lives. Education attendance has improved and is well supported by the staff team. The registered manager and the staff team provide a good standard of individualised care to the young people. The young people build and maintain trusting relationships with the adults who care for them.

The young people's likes and dislikes are understood and acknowledged in different ways. Achievements are praised and rewarded. Rewards include positive reinforcement, an activity of choice, toys, make-up and clothing. The young people enjoy spending time with the adults who care for them. This was evident as the staff and young people gathered at mealtimes and relaxed doing activities together.

Young people are sensitively welcomed into the home from the point of admission. A parent commented, 'The staff here are just amazing. I came to visit before [Name] came here. I was amazed at how happy and engaging the young people are with the staff. They just really care, and they have helped us as a family.'

Young people are supported to have contact with family and friends where it is safe to do so. The staff team offers continued support to the young people and their families during contacts. This is to ensure that it is a positive and enjoyable experience for both the young person and their family member.

Young people's views are sought through varying means. Regular house meetings allow young people to contribute to their care. The young people's files are currently being updated. Care plans, risk assessments and other key documents are being written and devised in an age-appropriate way. This will help young people to understand how they are being supported and contribute to the care they receive. To further develop and strengthen individual care plans, they could read more explicitly to detail how young people are being supported in different aspects of their lives.

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

Young people's individual vulnerabilities are well understood. Risk assessments are robust and identify strategies to mitigate risk of harm. There is good evidence of a multi-agency approach to safeguarding young people.

Young people are safeguarded effectively at this home. Staff follow safeguarding procedures in line with individual risk assessments. There have been some low-level, self-harming behaviours for one young person. This has required additional safeguards to be put in place. Staff have followed guidance from risk assessments to ensure that risks are managed effectively. Young people are supported to understand the actions taken by the staff team.

Key-worker sessions do take place and are informed by the risk assessments and care plans. They demonstrate the proactive ways that the staff team helps young people to stay safe. Topics explored include sexual health, independent living and emotional support. There have been several bullying incidents in the home. These are appropriately recorded but there is a lack of response to prevent further episodes. Key-worker sessions around bullying would help young people to understand acceptable behaviours and the impact of bullying on others.

Missing from home episodes have significantly reduced for those young people currently living in the home. When young people have gone missing from the home, the correct procedures are followed. Independent visits take place following the return home of young people. This helps to strengthen the strategies identified in young people's risk assessments. There is a strong emphasis on welcoming young people home following missing episodes.

Physical interventions are only used if they are for the safety of the young people and others. There is evidence that the young people respond to the clear boundaries in the home. This has helped to reduce the number of physical interventions used for one young person who was recently admitted.

To strengthen safeguarding practice in the home, safeguarding should be added as a stand-alone agenda item in team meetings.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is appropriately qualified and well experienced for the position held. She is supported in her role by a deputy manager and experienced staff team. There have been staffing issues since the last inspection. Staff from other homes in the organisation have assisted on occasions to cover the rota. The home is currently recruiting for new staff members. The registered manager has also assisted with additional cover to ensure that the young people and staff team are appropriately supported. Despite there being staffing issues, the home continues to meet the aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose.

The registered manager ensures that the staff team receives regular appraisals and

supervisions. Mandatory training is up to date. This supports staff development and gives opportunities to reflect on practice. There is now a new supervision template, with safeguarding added as a stand-alone agenda item.

The registered manager leads by example. She is clear about the home's strengths as well as areas that can be further developed. She is currently supporting the staff team to look at training and evidence-based research to improve practice. This is likely to enhance the experiences of the young people whom they care for.

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of how the young people's past experiences are likely to have an impact on them. This helps her to advocate well on behalf of the young people. She is able to look beyond the young people's presenting behaviours. The staff team also takes this approach. This means that the young people receive consistent approaches to help support them and protect them.

The registered manager has good relationships with a network of professionals. Comments from professionals acknowledge the hard work and resilience of the registered manager and the staff team. This demonstrates the level of commitment to the young people.

Young people's records are held both electronically and on paper files. The electronic system is impressive. However, the two systems are not yet fully compatible. During the inspection, some records were not easily accessible to the inspector. For example, it was not possible to track key-worker sessions completed that are linked to strategies identified in risk assessments. This made it difficult to track progress and outcomes for young people in a timely way. To improve practice in this area, the registered manager should devise an effective system that links documents, making them easily accessible.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC033467

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: St Cuthbert's Care

Registered provider address: St Cuthbert's House, West Road, Newcastle-upon-Tyne
NE15 7PY

Responsible individual: Sheila Errington

Registered manager: Gail Lamb

Inspector:

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

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