

# SC432843

Registered provider: Talbot House Trust Newcastle Upon Tyne

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to five children who have behavioural difficulties and/or learning difficulties. The manager registered with Ofsted in January 2020.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

### Inspection dates: 18 to 19 May 2021

**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:** 21 October 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** sustained effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>Inspection type</b>	<b>Inspection judgement</b>
21/10/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/05/2019	Full	Good
14/08/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
01/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good

## Inspection judgements

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

Children have excellent relationships with the staff and enjoy spending time with them and their peers in the home. The home has improved in its appearance. Children's bedrooms are personalised and represent their interests and experiences. There is scope for further opportunities to gain children's views and opinions in the decoration of corridor areas in the home. There are plans in place to do this which are yet to be finalised. This enables children to feel respected and to invest in their home with pride.

Children enjoy being out in the grounds of the home and fully explore the vast spaces in which they can play. They enjoy playing games such as football, trampolining and cricket with their peers and staff. As a result, children happily engage in healthy lifestyles and develop friendships with confidence.

Children's care plans include clear targets and goals so that progress can be monitored. Children receive incentives in all aspects of their care. They develop independence skills and staff recognise and celebrate their achievements. The staff meet with the children every Sunday to discuss meal plans for the week. Children's views and opinions are listened to and acted upon.

Staff support children to spend time with their family. Staff engage well with families to ensure that everyone is safe and children are able to attend in person or via electronic devices. A family commented, 'The care is fantastic, I cannot fault them, it is a fantastic team.'

All children are in education and attending. The manager and her staff team are committed advocates for the children. This has enabled children to move between school and college with support and good transitional planning. Additionally, staff help children who have been out of education for some time to return successfully. As a result, children are developing in confidence.

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

Children are increasingly safe in the home. Individual children's risk assessment and behaviour management plans are comprehensive. However, there is too much emphasis on historical risks which makes children's plans overly cluttered. This can lead to confusion and potentially misrepresent current concerns. This prevents staff from using the most appropriate strategies to reduce the risks to children.

Staff manage children's behaviour well. However, isolated incidents of concern have led to staff calling police to manage children's behaviour. This means that children were potentially at risk of criminalisation.

Staff have effectively managed the safe care of children during the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff and children share positive relationships with each other that are based on trust, respect, and shared experiences during difficult times. This means children are less anxious. Staff providing clear messages of support and guidance to children helps them to feel safe.

A child said, 'Staff handle situations and incidents well and they help us to understand.'

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

This is the manager's first inspection since registration in January 2020. She has brought structure, organisation and stability to the team. This has led to good outcomes and experiences for children. Comments made by staff included, 'She is a great figurehead, firm but fair and very approachable. She communicates well and has the well-being of the children at the heart of everything she does.'

The manager communicates well with a range of professionals. She advocates strongly on behalf of the children. This ensures that they receive the relevant services and specialist support when required. A social worker commented on leaders and managers, 'They have been great, they keep me informed, always attending meetings.'

The manager has monitoring and review systems in place and responds well to reports by the external independent visitor. However, there are shortfalls in the recording of incidents in care plans. Detail is not always clear. This can lead to confusion when reviewing plans. The manager has not always identified this shortfall.

On two occasions, the registered manager has failed to notify Ofsted when the police have been required to attend the home. On these occasions, there was no harm to a child and no requirement for the police to intervene. However, this lack in notifying the regulator does not enable independent scrutiny and monitoring of care provided to children.

Most staff are qualified and experienced. There are four senior members of the team who support the manager in ensuring that there is good leadership during each shift. They receive regular supervision and provide shadowing experiences for new staff. This ensures that care is maintained at a good and consistent level to children.

The manager ensures that the training matrix is up to date, which supports her monitoring and review processes. However, face-to-face training has been limited during the COVID-19 pandemic and training is mostly via online resources. However, there is no system for identifying the method of training delivery on the matrix, which makes it difficult to assess the suitability of the training. The manager recognises this as an area for improvement.

A consistent staff team has been maintained during the COVID-19 pandemic. This has enabled children to receive care from staff who know them well. Recruitment has taken place to increase staffing, and recruitment checks have been thorough and records well maintained.

## 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 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>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(vi))</p> <p>This particularly refers to using appropriate measures of control and restraint in accordance with children's needs before requesting police intervention to manage behaviour.</p>	23 June 2021
<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;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>This relates to staff identifying and recording current relevant risks in children's individual risk assessments.</p>	30 June 2021
<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;</p>	30 June 2021

<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>This relates to staff understanding their role in recording clear and precise records in children’s individual care plans.</p>	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b))</p>	3 June 2021

## Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that for the home to be a nurturing and homely environment there needs to be consideration in improving the decoration in certain areas of the home. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. The registered person should also ensure that the training matrix clearly identifies online and face-to-face training. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.11)

## 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:** SC432843

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

**Registered provider:** Talbot House Trust

**Registered provider address:** Talbot House School, Newcastle upon Tyne

**Responsible individual:** Deirdre Pearson

**Registered manager:** Sophie Robinson

## Inspector

Michael Dack, Social Care Inspector

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