



The Regulation and  
Quality Improvement  
Authority

**Children's Home Inspection Report**  
**IN043803**  
**30 May 2024**

Information on legislation and standards underpinning inspections can be found on our website <https://www.rqia.org.uk/>

## 1.0 Service information

|                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <b>Service Type:</b><br>Children's Home<br><br><b>Provider Type:</b><br>Independent Provider<br><br><b>Located within:</b> – Western Health and Social Care Trust                       | <b>Manager status:</b><br>Registered |
| <b>Brief description of how the service operates:</b><br><br>The children living in this home may have had traumatic experiences and have been assessed as in need of residential care. |                                      |

## 2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 30 May 2024 between 10.20 a.m. and 4 p.m. The inspection was conducted by a care inspector.

The inspection assessed progress with an area for improvement identified during the last care and estates inspection and to determine if the home was delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and if the service was well led. This area for improvement, in relation to the environment, was assessed as met.

Staff had a detailed understanding of children's individual needs and positive relationships were evident. The inspector found good practice was identified in relation to the admissions process and experience for children, and the consideration of potential group dynamics.

The inspector concluded there was safe, effective and compassionate care delivered in the home and the home was well led by the manager. There were no areas for improvement identified.

The findings of this report will provide the manager with the necessary information to improve staff practice and children's experience.

### **3.0 How we inspect**

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how they were performing at the time of our inspection, highlighting both good practice and any areas for improvement. It is the responsibility of the service provider to ensure compliance with legislation, standards and best practice, and to address any deficits identified during our inspections.

In preparation for this inspection, a range of information about the service was reviewed to help plan the inspection.

A range of documents were examined to determine that effective systems were in place to manage the home and deliver safe care.

RQIA inspectors seek to speak with children, their relatives/carers, visitors and staff for their opinion on the quality of care and their experience of living, visiting or working in this home.

Information was provided to children, relatives/carers, staff and other stakeholders on how they could provide feedback on the quality of care and support in this home. This included questionnaires and an electronic survey.

The findings of the inspection were discussed with the manager at the conclusion of the inspection.

### **4.0 What people told us about the service**

The inspector spoke with children and staff.

Children told us that they liked living in the home and that there were good relationships with staff. The inspector observed the children and their interactions with staff on the day of inspection. The children's body language presented as relaxed and content.

Staff were compassionate, warm, respectful and caring in their interactions with the children. Staff were observed adjusting their communication skills to match the needs of the children.

Discussions with staff confirmed that they felt positive about their induction to the home, communication within the team, how children were being supported, and the support and guidance available from the management team.

No feedback was received by RQIA via questionnaires or electronic survey within the required timescales for inclusion in this report.

## 5.0 The inspection

### 5.1 What has this service done to meet any areas for improvement identified at or since last inspection?

| Areas for improvement from the last inspection on 03 March 2023                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |                          |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Action required to ensure compliance with The Minimum Standards for Children's Homes (DHSSPS) (2019) |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Validation of compliance |
| <b>Area for improvement 1</b><br><br><b>Ref:</b> Standard 22<br><br><b>Stated:</b> First time        | The responsible person shall ensure a health and safety risk assessment is completed and implement a planned maintenance inspection scheme on the children's play apparatus and structural fixings to ensure compliance with health and safety standards. | <b>Met</b>               |
|                                                                                                      | <b>Action taken as confirmed during the inspection:</b><br>This area for improvement was met.                                                                                                                                                             |                          |

## 5.2 Inspection findings

### 5.2.1 How does the service ensure children are getting the right care at the right time?

Good practice was identified with respect to the matching and admissions process within the home. Review of records and discussions with the management team confirmed that decision making with respect to potential admissions to the home was informed by a comprehensive assessment of the children's needs and wishes. New admissions to the home were completed in a planned way and feedback confirmed that introductory visits to the home took place prior to moving in.

Referrals were thoroughly assessed, and matched against what the home could offer and to the dynamics within the home. The needs of the children who were already living in the home were fully considered as was the potential impact that a new admission might have. Sampling of records and discussion with the manager provided assurance that child centred and compassionate actions were taken to support a positive transition to the service.

Discussion with the manager identified that the challenges presented by the current group dynamic were appropriately managed; a thorough group dynamic risk assessment was undertaken to consider any potential changes to the group dynamic and had directly informed decision making around admissions to the home. The inspector was assured that the matching and admissions processes were robust and promoted positive outcomes for the children.

### **5.2.2 How does the service ensure that safe staffing arrangements are in place?**

Discussion with the manager and review of records confirmed staff records were maintained that contained essential information such as staff qualifications, experience and professional registration, and were consistent with Schedule 2 of The Children's Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005.

Induction for staff is necessary to provide assurance that staff involved in the delivery of care, possess the knowledge, skills and ability to deliver safe and effective care to the children in the home. A robust induction process will not only benefit newer members of staff with integrating into their role, but it will also help promote a consistent approach in relation to daily practices within the home. Review of records provided assurance that staff received a comprehensive induction into the home.

The management team convened regular team meetings and provided regular staff supervision. Bringing staff together on a regular basis is essential to maintaining good communication, developing a shared vision and informs the detailed and complex decisions that need to be made on a day to day basis to meet the needs of the children. Good communication was further supported by effective shift planning and handovers.

Discussion with the manager confirmed all safeguarding investigations had been dealt with appropriately and that the process was child centred. The inspector was assured that staff were aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, duty to report concerns promptly, and that the management team had a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities with respect to the regional child protection policy and procedures.

### **5.2.3 Does the service ensure that the home environment meets the needs of the children?**

Children's individual and communal spaces were decorated to reflect their individual interests, creating a child centred environment. Internally, the home was well maintained and presented as a comfortable, homely space. The external areas were well presented; and efforts had been made to maintain the garden; creating a space that was inviting for children.

Children's homes should support children to develop the skills they need to thrive and succeed as they mature and approach adulthood. Actions that restrict children should have clear justification based on a robust assessment of risk; with clear evidence that the restriction is proportionate; in place for the least amount of time; has a reduction plan in place (as appropriate); and is agreed with the multi-disciplinary team, in consultation with the child and relevant others. A robust review mechanism is also required which considers the effectiveness and impact of the restrictive practice.

Discussion with the management team provided assurance that the restrictive practices identified were necessary to promote safety. However, the inspector concluded that records regarding restrictive practice required improvement. Advice was given with the aim to support the service to embed a rights based approach in the home and which is evidenced in recording practices. Progress in this area will be monitored through future inspection activity.

## **6.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement**

This inspection resulted in no areas for improvement being identified. Findings of the inspection were discussed with the registered manager as part of the inspection process and can be found in the main body of the report.



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