

Children's Home Inspection Report
IN045140
12 November 2024

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

1.0 Service information

Service Type: Children's Home Provider Type: Independent Provider Located within: South Eastern Health and Social Care Trust (SEHSCT)	Manager status: Not registered
Brief description of how the service operates: This home is registered as a small children's home as defined in The Minimum Standards for Children's Homes (Department of Health) (2023) . The children living in this home may have had adverse childhood experiences and have been assessed as in need of residential care.	

2.0 Inspection summary

An unannounced inspection took place on 12 November 2024, from 2.40pm to 3.45pm. This was completed by a pharmacist inspector and focused on medicines management within the home.

The inspection was undertaken to evidence how medicines are managed in relation to the regulations and standards and to determine if the home is delivering safe, effective and compassionate care and is well led in relation to medicines management. The areas for improvement identified at the last care inspection were carried forward for review at the next inspection.

There were no prescribed medicines in the home on the day of the inspection. Satisfactory storage arrangements were in place should a child be prescribed medicines. Staff were aware of the necessary medicine related records to be maintained; including records for controlled drugs. Systems were in place to ensure staff were trained and competent to manage medicines. No new areas for improvement were identified.

Details of the inspection findings, including areas for improvement carried forward for review at the next inspection, can be found in the main body of this report and in the quality improvement plan (QIP) (Section 4.0).

RQIA would like to thank the staff for their assistance throughout the inspection.

3.0 The inspection

3.1 How we inspect

RQIA's inspections form part of our ongoing assessment of the quality of services. Our reports reflect how the home was performing against the regulations and standards, 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.

To prepare for this inspection information held by RQIA about this home was reviewed. This included previous areas for improvement identified, registration information, and any other written or verbal information received from children, relatives, staff or the commissioning trust.

Throughout the inspection the RQIA inspector will seek to speak with children, their relatives or visitors and staff to obtain their opinions on the quality of the care and support, their experiences of living, visiting or working in this home.

3.2 What people told us about the service and their quality of life

Staff interactions with children were warm, friendly and supportive. It was evident that they knew them well. Children appeared comfortable in their surroundings and were observed interacting with staff in a relaxed manner.

Staff expressed satisfaction with how the home was managed. They also said that they had the appropriate training to look after children and meet their needs. They said that the team communicated well and the management team were readily available to discuss any issues and concerns should they arise.

No completed questionnaires or responses to the staff survey were received following the inspection.

3.3 Inspection findings

3.3.1 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately prescribed, monitored and reviewed?

Children should be registered with a general practitioner (GP) to ensure that they receive appropriate medical care when they need it. At times children's' needs may change and therefore their medicines should be regularly monitored and reviewed. This is usually done by a GP, a pharmacist or during a hospital admission.

Children were registered with a GP and medicines were dispensed by the community pharmacist.

Personal medication records are records used to list all of the prescribed medicines, with details of how and when they should be administered. It is important that these records accurately reflect the most recent prescription to ensure that medicines are administered as prescribed and because they may be used by other healthcare professionals, for example, at medication reviews or hospital appointments.

Staff were aware of the necessary information to be maintained should a child be prescribed medicines. They stated expected practice is that two members check and sign the records when they are written or updated to ensure accuracy. It was agreed that each child should have a personal medication record template in place, in the event that medicines may be prescribed.

3.3.2 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are supplied on time, stored safely and disposed of appropriately?

Medicine stock levels must be checked on a regular basis and new stock must be ordered on time. This ensures that the child's medicines are available for administration as prescribed. It is important that they are stored safely and securely so that there is no unauthorised access and disposed of promptly to ensure that a discontinued medicine is not administered in error.

Satisfactory arrangements were in place for the secure storage and safe disposal of medicines when necessary.

3.3.3 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately administered within the home?

It is important to have a clear record of which medicines have been administered to children to ensure that they are receiving the correct prescribed treatment.

A template of the medicine administration record to be used should a medicine be administered, was provided. Staff were aware that completed records should be readily retrievable for audit/review. Recent records were found to have been accurately completed.

Controlled drugs are medicines which are subject to strict legal controls and legislation. They commonly include strong pain killers. The receipt, administration and disposal of controlled drugs should be recorded in a controlled drug record book. Staff were aware of the necessary storage requirements and records to be maintained should a child be prescribed a controlled drug.

The medicine administration audits which are completed when children are prescribed and administered medicines were discussed.

3.3.4 What arrangements are in place to ensure that medicines are safely managed during transfer of care?

People who use medicines may follow a pathway of care that can involve both health and social care services. It is important that medicines are not considered in isolation, but as an integral part of the pathway, and at each step. Problems with the supply of medicines and how

information is transferred put people at increased risk of harm when they change from one healthcare setting to another.

The management of medicines for new admissions was reviewed. Staff advised that robust arrangements were in place to ensure that they were provided with a current list of the child's medicines if prescribed.

3.3.5 What arrangements are in place to ensure that staff can identify, report and learn from adverse incidents?

Occasionally medicines incidents occur within homes. It is important that there are systems in place which quickly identify that an incident has occurred so that action can be taken to prevent a recurrence and that staff can learn from the incident. A robust audit system will help staff to identify medicine related incidents.

No medicine related incidents have been reported to RQIA since registration of the service. Management and staff were familiar with the type of incidents that should be reported.

Although no medicines were prescribed at the time of the inspection, the audits completed indicated that the small number of medicines prescribed in recent months had been administered as prescribed and records appropriately maintained.

3.3.6 What measures are in place to ensure that staff in the home are qualified, competent and sufficiently experienced and supported to manage medicines safely?

To ensure that children are well looked after and receive their medicines appropriately, staff who administer medicines must be appropriately trained. The registered person has a responsibility to check that they staff are competent in managing medicines and that they are supported. Policies and procedures should be up to date and readily available for staff reference.

There were records in place to show that staff responsible for medicines management had been trained and deemed competent. Annual refresher training was planned for all relevant staff during November 2024. It was agreed that records of competency assessment would be reviewed following this training. Medicines management policies and procedures were in place.

4.0 Quality Improvement Plan/Areas for Improvement

	Regulations	Standards
Total number of Areas for Improvement	2*	1*

* the total number of areas for improvement includes three which are carried forward for review at the next inspection.

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

Quality Improvement Plan	
Action required to ensure compliance with The Children's Homes Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2005	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Regulation 25(3)(f) Stated: First time To be completed by: 21 November 2024	The registered person shall ensure governance arrangements with respect to staff recruitment are reviewed and improved. Records must be maintained to evidence safe recruitment of staff. Evidence of staff recruitment must be available for inspection.
	Action required to ensure compliance with this regulation was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection. Ref: 2.0
Area for improvement 2 Ref: Regulation 5 Stated: First time To be completed by: 7 November 2024	The registered person shall review, and where appropriate revise the Statement of Purpose to ensure it accurately reflects the staffing arrangements within the home. The revised Statement of Purpose must be submitted to RQIA.
	Action required to ensure compliance with this regulation was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection. Ref: 2.0
Action required to ensure compliance with The Minimum Standards for Children's Homes (Department of Health) (2023)	
Area for improvement 1 Ref: Standard 17.10 Stated: First time To be completed by: 21 November 2024	The registered person shall ensure that an assessment of staff competency is undertaken as part of induction to ensure staff have the necessary knowledge, skills, and values required to meet the assessed need of the children in their care.
	Action required to ensure compliance with this standard was not reviewed as part of this inspection and this is carried forward to the next inspection. Ref: 2.0



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