

1231405

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides residential short stays for up to 6 children with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The home may provide care for one child to live long term. A local authority runs the home.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2016.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 March 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 28 January 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2025	Full	Outstanding
23/01/2024	Full	Outstanding
21/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
22/02/2022	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The short break service continues to provide exceptional care.

Children receive well-planned, individualised care during their stays. They benefit from consistent support from an experienced and stable team of staff who create a fun and nurturing environment where children can thrive. As a result, children experience a high standard of care, build trusting relationships with staff, feel safe and make progress. Children say they enjoy attending their short breaks at the home. One child said, 'I like winding staff up and calling them funny names.' Another child said, 'You can have the best time. You can bounce on the trampoline.'

Celebrating children's achievements is a key strength of the service. Children and staff have taken part in a range of awards ceremonies, and last year, they marked the home's 10-year anniversary by raising funds for future activities. Further events, including a coffee morning and a summer fair, are planned for the coming year. These opportunities help children feel part of their community.

There is one young person living in the home, and they recently celebrated their eighteenth birthday. The manager is working closely with the young person's advocate to source an appropriate placement for their move into adulthood. The young person recently enjoyed their prom and a holiday away with staff.

The environment is warm and welcoming and child friendly. Various rooms have been redecorated. Children were recently involved in choosing new bedroom designs and colours through their interactive group meetings. Additionally, there has been a recent focus on artificial intelligence to improve documents in the home. Children have been involved in producing a new children's guide, a complaints procedure and a fire evacuation plan for the home. These documents are child friendly and help children to understand information about their home.

Everything in the home is designed to create an inclusive experience for children. They take part in a wide range of enjoyable activities both inside and outside the home. Children are particularly looking forward to upcoming archery, canoeing and rock-climbing sessions in the coming weeks. Mementos of each child's journey are captured and stored in memory boxes. When the children leave the service, these are presented as part of their leaving gift.

Consultation with children is central to how the home operates. The manager has recently introduced a new consultation forum called 'You asked, we did'. Children are supported to write down their wishes and feelings and to take part in monthly meetings. The outcomes are displayed on the notice board so children can see how their thoughts, views and feelings have been responded to.

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

Safeguarding practice is highly effective and there are high staffing ratios. The safety and well-being of children are at the centre of staff practice. Staff understand children's needs, vulnerabilities and the potential risks they may be exposed to. Staff know how to report and respond to concerns about children's safety, and they take appropriate action at all times.

A newly developed personal care, comfort and dignity guide is in place for each child. This is child friendly and provides staff with information on how each child wishes to be cared for during their stay.

Children benefit from a nurturing and structured environment where positive behaviour is actively promoted. Positive recognition and praise outweigh negative consequences. There have been no negative consequences or restraint recorded since the last inspection.

The manager has ensured that fire practices in the home are safe. Each child now has a personal emergency evacuation plan that provides staff with details of the support a child requires in the event of a fire. Children regularly take part in fire evacuations, and each child is rewarded with a certificate for their participation.

There are clear and appropriate arrangements in place for the management of medication. Staff receive training and are knowledgeable about medication processes. This means children are given their medication safely by skilled staff who understand and meet their health needs. When staff have queries about medication, they promptly seek out the information from the relevant people.

Recruitment procedures and practices are safe and effective. All staff are checked and vetted before starting work. These checks ensure that only suitable adults are employed to work with children in the home. Good-quality induction programmes ensure that staff are fully equipped to care for children safely and in a manner that protects their rights and dignity.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has a permanent manager who is suitably qualified and experienced. She is supported by two assistant managers, and they have all worked in the home for a considerable period. They are child centred and have high aspirations for the children. Staff share these aspirations and are nurturing, dedicated and know the children well. The staff are diverse in their skills and experience, which contributes to improved outcomes for children.

An independent person undertakes external monitoring. However, the visitor has not consistently ensured that the reports are sent to the regulator in a timely way.

The manager's internal monitoring of children's documents requires some attention. For example, the manager needs to ensure that all children staying at the home have an up-to-date education, health and care plan. This will help staff access the required information they need for each child. Additionally, further work is required on risk management plans to ensure these provide clear strategies for staff to follow, using language that is child centred.

Managers and staff complete a range of training that focuses on meeting the children's individual needs. However, records do not consistently reflect the training that staff have received.

The manager has implemented some recent research papers during team meetings, such as the 'Lundy model' and 'social graces'. This means staff have had the opportunity to upskill their knowledge, and it has enabled them to celebrate children's identity and participation.

Staff benefit from regular supervision sessions and frequent team meetings to help them to develop and learn. Annual appraisals also take place, where targets are set for the year ahead. Individual staff are champions in the home for different areas and share information to continually improve the care provided to children.

Parents and professionals gave positive feedback. One parent said, 'It's like home from home and there is really good communication.' One professional said, 'This service transforms children's and families' lives.'

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, The 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1) (2)(c)(h)) This specifically relates to the manager ensuring that all training records are up to date, children's risk management plans contain all relevant information and are written to be helpful to the child and staff and that each child has an up-to-date education, health and care plan.	24 April 2026
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to— HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1)(7)(a)) This specifically relates to ensuring that all reports completed by the independent person are sent to the regulator in a timely way.	24 April 2026

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: 1231405

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 78, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Tracey Sykes

Registered manager: Tracey Morris

Inspectors

Judith Birchall, Social Care Inspector

Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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