

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 six children who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The home may provide care for one child to live here permanently. The home is run by a local authority.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since February 2016.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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	outstanding
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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: 22 February 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2022	Full	Good
28/11/2019	Full	Good
28/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
12/09/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive because of the excellent care and support they receive. Children enjoy extremely positive relationships with staff which are built on trust and respect. Children are happy here and this is evident in the smiles and laughter which reverberate around the setting. A child said: 'The staff are great; I love it here.'

Some children spoke to the inspector, and confidently told them about the fun things that they do here. They spoke enthusiastically about choosing their activities and how they enjoy having a bath. Parents said that the children look forward to their sleepover with their friends.

Children access a creative and innovative range of activities, which support all areas of their development. They plant fruit, vegetables and flowers in the greenhouse. Children help to harvest the produce and use it to make food and drinks. Staff said that the children especially enjoyed crushing the grapes that they grew to make 'wine' (blackcurrant juice).

Children receive a bespoke care package that continually evolves to meet their diverse needs. The children's plans have been redesigned to ensure that they are accessible to the children. This was because of staff's training and research on liberty protection safeguards.

Staff are highly skilled communicators. They seamlessly adapt their communication style as they interact with the children. For example, staff switch from spoken word to using signs and pictorial images to help children to have a voice and make decisions about their care. Consequently, children are at the very heart of everything that the staff do.

Outcomes for children have improved because of their stays. Some children now sleep through the night. Other children have moved into single beds, which has improved their confidence and self-esteem. This is because children feel safe to try new things, such as testing out different types of bed. Consequently, this has made a massive difference to the children's health and well-being and that of their families, as they now have a good night's sleep.

Children's health and well-being are prioritised. Staff are trained to meet the children's diverse needs. They are acutely aware of each child's needs and how to respond to medical emergencies, such as seizures. This means children are safe and receive the support that they need.

Staff collaborate effectively with schools to support children's educational needs. They are fully aware of the children's goals and provided opportunities for children

to practise these at the setting, for example encouraging children to share or take turns.

The outcomes for children who live in the setting are excellent. This is supporting the children to grow in confidence. Staff carefully planned the child's move to their new setting, which meant they sustained this progress and continue to move forward.

Staff are strong advocates for the children. They encourage the children to be as independent as possible given their individual needs. For example, children enjoy ordering their food when they are out with staff, they learn to use automated checkouts, brush their teeth, and to get dressed. This successfully fosters children's confidence and self-esteem.

Partnerships with parents and carers are excellent. Parents are highly complimentary about the setting and staff. Parents said that the staff care for the children as if they were their own. Staff regularly consult with parents on the care provided and how they can improve on the service. Parents also commented on the high levels of support staff give them. Ultimately, they participate in all aspects of their child's care.

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

Children's safety and well-being are given the highest priority. Staff are trained and well versed in safeguarding and child protection. They are confident to act should they have a concern about a child.

This is a highly inclusive setting because staff have an innate understanding of the diverse needs of each child. Staff are aware that the main risks for children are regarding their medical and healthcare needs. Detailed plans are implemented to ensure that every eventuality is considered. They plan and risk-assess activities to ensure that all children can participate and enjoy their stays.

The risk of a child being missing from the setting is minimal. However, staff are not complacent and realise that some children may become distracted and run off. Robust procedures are in place should this occur.

Consequences and physical intervention are not used. Staff are intuitive to the changes in the children's moods. This means that they can quickly intervene or distract the children to prevent them from becoming overanxious. This reassures the children and helps them to settle. Staff help children to build friendships with one another and to take part in activities.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures mean children are cared for by suitable staff. This keeps the children safe.

The home is maintained to a high standard and has all the equipment needed to care for the children safely. Regular maintenance is conducted on mechanical aids, such as hoists, to ensure that they remain in good condition. The staff make best use of all the available space, for example creating different areas in the greenhouse so that this is accessible all year round to the children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager and registered individual are inspirational, confident and ambitious for children to succeed. They work tirelessly with the staff to provide a fun-filled short-break stay which caters for the specific needs of the children. The highly committed staff team continually adapts the plans for children to ensure that they get the most out of their stays. Parents said that the staff are 'amazing', and that their children get extremely excited when they know that they are coming here.

Staff said that this is not just a job to them; it is so much more. A member of staff said: 'The job satisfaction is very high as we are a dedicated team, and always push to give the children opportunities that they may struggle to access outside of the home.'

A professional who said: 'The setting overall works well for our children. All of the staff team are experienced, trained and more importantly love their job, which makes it a very nurturing and caring environment.'

Staff said that they receive excellent training and support. They are encouraged to take on specific roles linked to their personal skills and interests, such as gardening, organising events and cooking. This brings a real energy to the setting.

The manager and staff are continually looking at new ways of working. Research on autistic burnout enabled staff to revise the care plans for a child and how they interacted with them. This reduced the child's anxieties and enabled them to express how they were feeling to staff.

This is a highly reflective setting. However, this is not conveyed in the manager's monitoring reports. Similarly, reports by the independent person do not provide a critical analysis of what the setting does well and any areas of development. This does not help the setting to fully evaluate its service.

The manager and staff are confident to challenge professionals when they feel that they are too slow in responding to the children's needs. This means children consistently receive the right help and support.

Overall, parents said that because of the support from staff their children are more mobile, are gaining independence, are eating better, have friends, and are now able to have their hair cut.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that reports compiled by the independent person and internal monitoring are evaluative and demonstrate what the setting does well and any areas of development. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: Lancashire County Council

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

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: Tracey Morris

Inspector

Chris Scully, Social Care Inspector

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