

1241782

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this home. It is registered to provide care for up to six children with social and emotional difficulties. There were five children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2016.

Inspection date: 7 December 2023

Date of last inspection: 25 October 2023

Judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At this inspection, the inspector evaluated:

- the care of children
- the safety of children
- the effectiveness of leaders and managers.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children, using the social care common inspection framework. This assurance 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'.

Findings from the inspection

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance inspection.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. One child was receiving support in a family member's home. One child has recently moved to another service.

The home has experienced a period of crisis resulting in an increased police presence at the home. This inspection took place to explore the circumstances leading to police intervention, including the safety and well-being of the children living in the home.

Following the admission of a sixth child to the home, there was a significant increase in children being reported as missing. Staff followed the missing-from-home procedures to secure the safe return of the child. However, due to an increase in behaviours which led to staff being assaulted, staff required the assistance of the police to manage these situations.

Behaviour management measures were ineffective in managing the period of crisis. Some children who were previously settled in the home became involved in risk-taking and challenging behaviours. Consequently, other children felt unsafe. One child said, 'I would get picked on when staff wasn't looking. I was scared and didn't know what to do.' Since the departure of one child, the manager and staff are working hard to re-establish the home's boundaries and the relationships between the children.

Incidents of bullying were not picked up by staff and some children did not feel they could make the staff aware of what was happening in the home. One child said, 'I know the staff would support me, but I was scared to say anything.'

The manager and staff have spent time with children discussing the unsettled period. This has enabled children to speak about their anxieties and receive some reassurance from the manager and staff. Children have been listened to. Senior managers have agreed not to offer any further placements until after the festive season.

Assessments to manage children's individual risks are updated and include guidance for staff to mitigate and respond to risks. Key-work sessions and placement meetings are held to reinforce the home's boundaries and to support the children in managing their own emotions.

Damage to the property has been addressed. At the time of this inspection, the home was looking festive and was warm, clean and tidy.

During the unsettled period, leaders and managers contributed to a daily multi-agency briefing to discuss all the children living in the home and the level of support required. A learning review is now under way. This review will look at the impact on children and staff and lessons learned. The manager said, 'It is important that we all learn from this.'

Most children have trusting relationships with staff and feel they are able to identify a staff member to talk to about any problems they may have. One child said, 'Staff are there for me when I need them. I feel safe around the staff.'

Managers and staff are working hard to ensure a positive move from the home for two children. One child will be moving to independent living and another child is planning to return to live with a family member. The manager anticipates a level of disengagement and has been provided with extra staffing support in case this should be required.

The requirements from the previous inspection have not been reviewed and remain in place.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/10/2023	Full	Good
20/09/2022	Full	Good
13/04/2021	Full	Good
03/09/2019	Full	Good

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child — is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e))	24 December 2023
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1) (2)(a)(viii))	24 December 2023
The registered person must ensure that—	24 December 2023

children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, the registered provider must remove internal locks on doors to communal areas.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, leaders and managers must ensure that staff receive regular supervision.	24 December 2023
The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans; help each child to develop socially aware behaviour; encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding;	10 January 2024

help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone;

help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship;

strive to gain each child's respect and trust;

understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children;

de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children;

understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable;

have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them; and

that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others.

(Regulation 11 (1)(a)(b)(c)
(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(vii)(viii)(ix)(xi)(xii)(xiii)(b))

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1241782

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: Mark Davies

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2023