

1241782

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full 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 who may have social and emotional difficulties. There were six children living in the home at the time of the inspection.

The manager registered with Ofsted in December 2016.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 October 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the time of inspection, six children lived in this home, including two children who moved in earlier this year. Some children have lived here for over two years.

A significant strength of this home is the warm and natural relationships which managers and staff have with children. These relationships are built on trust and mutual respect. This creates a nurturing environment where children feel valued and understood. Staff are attentive to the individual needs of each child. They ensure that children's voices are heard, and their preferences are considered in daily activities and decisions. This approach not only enhances the children's overall experience but also contributes to their emotional and social development.

Children are helped and encouraged to maintain relationships with people who are important to them. Staff have positive relationships with family members. This helps with the formation of children's identity.

Staff encourage children to take part in activities that interest them, which helps to build their confidence. Children are offered a variety of activities tailored to their interests, which promotes engagement and enjoyment. This proactive approach ensures that children have opportunities to explore new interests and develop new skills. The majority of the children had a summer holiday of their choosing.

Staff regularly have meaningful conversations with children, which address both the children's wishes and any behavioural needs. This work supports the children's development but also enhances the staff's understanding of the children's needs.

Managers and staff place a strong emphasis on promoting age and ability-based independence planning, using a range of creative tools. This work is positively received by children and supports their development into adulthood. During the inspection, one child confidently made a cooked lunch for twelve people. This was very well received and appreciated, not to mention delicious.

Some children attend school or college. However, children who are not currently in formal education are not provided with consistent educational activities. Not all children have access to learning opportunities that support their academic and personal development.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children say they feel safe living in this home and are supported to progress. One child said, 'If I'd stayed in [home town], I just don't know what state I'd be in. In a way [the home] has saved me.'

The use of physical intervention is minimal and only used when necessary, within established procedures. The manager ensures a thorough analysis and oversight of incident records, with each incident being signed off by a senior manager. Children are able to speak with staff following these incidents. This approach ensures that restraint is used as a last resort and that children are supported in understanding the reasons behind such actions.

Health and safety arrangements ensure a safe environment. Room searches are conducted appropriately, with any dangerous items being promptly removed to prevent potential harm. This creates a secure living environment for the children.

Managers have an established and comprehensive response to children who go missing from the home. Staff show a clear understanding of the missing protocol, which is consistently followed. One child is regularly missing from home, which remains a concern. Multi-agency attempts to reduce this behaviour have had limited impact. Plans to reduce these incidents are also limited in effectiveness, which means the child remains at risk when missing from the home.

Managers have strong relationships with partner agencies. This enhances their understanding of the children and managing risks. However, this is not yet fully embedded in the multi-agency approach, and some agencies do not fully understand the ethos of the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by skilled and experienced managers who are enthusiastic about the children they care for and know them very well. Managers have made positive changes to the management of the home since the last inspection.

The home is sufficiently staffed by a consistent, stable staff team. Staff communicate effectively during daily handovers to ensure that the child's needs are prioritised, and appointments are attended. Team meetings take place monthly and are well attended.

The management team is strong and cohesive, and its members work effectively together to support both staff and children. This collaborative approach ensures that the home operates smoothly and that staff feel valued and supported in their roles. Managers create a positive work environment which is reflected in the staff's enthusiasm and commitment to their work. Staff say that they feel supported and that they "love" their job, which contributes to a positive atmosphere within the home.

Managers have put in place changes to the supervision format. This captures the strengths of staff and provides regular feedback on how to improve practice. Regular supervision sessions ensure that staff receive the guidance and support to progress in their roles. This shows the management team's commitment to continuous improvement and staff development. However, casual staff are not included in this development and are not regularly supervised by managers.

Appraisals are completed annually. However, they do not include the views of professionals or children. This does not provide a comprehensive assessment of staff performance to support practice development.

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 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))	15 November 2024
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 casual staff receive regular supervision.	15 November 2024
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; help each child to understand how to keep safe;	15 November 2024

have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;

understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;

take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and

that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(b))

In particular, the registered person must ensure that attempts to reduce children's risks are ongoing, and that they provide analysis of incidents to help understand the push and pull factors and patterns relevant to the individual child.

In addition, the registered person must continue to work effectively with partner agencies to reduce children's risks and reduce incidents of children going missing from home.

Recommendation

- The registered person should include the views of the children and other professionals when completing appraisals with staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 1241782

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Post vacant

Registered manager: Mark Davies

Inspectors

Sally Mitchell, Social Care Inspector
Cathy Wilkins, 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 looked after children, 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 www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

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 2024