

1241782

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Assurance inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to 6 children who may experience social and emotional difficulties. At the time of this inspection, 6 children were living at the home.

Two children spoke with the inspectors. The home has not had a registered manager since August 2025. The acting manager has left, and a new acting manager has been appointed.

Inspection date: 18 March 2026

Date of last inspection: 2 December 2025

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Information about this inspection

At these inspections, 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.

Children describe positive relationships with staff and feel understood and supported. Observations during the visit demonstrated warm and affectionate interactions, with staff greeting children attentively and providing nurturing responses.

There is a clear educational structure in the home; each child has an educational plan, and educational materials are easily accessible. Completed work was seen during the visit, and staff ensure that learning activities are available.

Most children's bedrooms are personalised, although one was notably sparse and doesn't reflect the child's identity. Children reported frustrations regarding delays in communication and practical decisions, such as requests for wi-fi or replacement furniture.

The arrangement for dispensing children's prescribed medication is much improved. Each child has clear records which are signed by staff, and all now have their own lockable box which is clearly labelled. Managers now audit the medication files each week and this is clearly recorded.

Staff have called for police assistance on occasion during times where children have been in crises, which has led to distressing experiences and potential criminalisation for children.

A serious incident where a child was missing overnight was not reported to the regulator or to senior managers. This prevents effective oversight by the regulator.

Consequences given by staff for children's misbehaviour were not proportionate and did not support children's learning.

Leaders acknowledge the inconsistencies in the approach of the previous manager and have acted by appointing a new permanent manager who is due to begin shortly

Managerial oversight of incidents has been inconsistent, with some records showing little or no evidence of management review. Internal monitoring processes lack depth and do not always demonstrate how lessons learned from incidents are applied to develop practice.

Staffing levels remain suitable and extra staff are deployed when it is necessary to support children. Staff report feeling supported, they meet as a team regularly. Staff

receive supervision of their practice where they are supported to reflect on their work with the children

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/12/2025	Full	Requires improvement to be good
14/10/2024	Full	Good
25/10/2023	Full	Good
20/09/2022	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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all incidents are evaluated with scrutiny, taking into consideration any possible learning outcomes that can be implemented within children's risk management plans, or to support the development of staff.	19 April 2026
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff—	19 April 2026

provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; help each child to understand and manage the impact of any experience of abuse or neglect; help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home; and (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b) (2)(b)(iv)(v)(vi)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children's bedrooms are personalised, clean, tidy and free from any health and safety hazards.	
The registered person must ensure that— the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vi)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that when consequences are used, they are subject to scrutiny to	19 April 2026

ensure that their use is fair, that they are also restorative in nature and not punitive.	
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; 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)) The registered person must ensure that significant incidents are notified to Ofsted.	19 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that there is a clear system in place to record room searches and follow up actions when they occur. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are provided with good quality supervisions, that give them opportunities to reflect on their practice and to discuss their ongoing development. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1241782

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 100, Preston
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Responsible individual: John Simpson

Registered manager:

Inspector

Cathy Wilkins, social care inspector

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