

1247670

Registered provider: West Cumbria Care and Support

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered by a charitable organisation to provide care under short-break arrangements for up to four children. The home is registered for children with learning disabilities.

There is a registered manager in post. He registered with Ofsted in December 2016.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 March 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 25 January 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/01/2023	Full	Good
10/10/2022	Full	Inadequate
08/03/2022	Full	Good
29/01/2020	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children who spend time at the home enjoy staying in an environment that is safe and accessorised with lots of their photographs. There are play and sensory areas in the home. The plans to develop the garden so all children can access it have still not been carried out. This means that some children are excluded from enjoying all outdoor play at the home.

Children are introduced to this short-break service sensitively and at a pace that suits them and their families. Staff spend time getting to know children during their visits to the home before their first overnight stay. One parent said that they were integral in designing a bespoke service for their child, and overnight stays commenced only when they were confident about taking this step.

Children have good relationships with staff who know them well. Children are encouraged to develop skills that enhance their independence. This includes teeth brushing and helping to prepare food.

Children's personalities and behaviours are carefully considered by managers when visits are being planned. Time is taken to ensure that children can build friendships with other children who stay at the home.

Staff are aware of children's communication methods and support these with the use of child-friendly aids. This empowers children to participate in choosing meals and activities and enable them to share their emotions.

The care children receive is consistent. Children look forward to attending the short-break service, which is evident in their behaviours and feedback from parents and professionals. One parent said, '[Name of child] is excited to stay, she got herself up, showered and packed her case. I don't think I have ever seen her so excited about anything.'

Children make good progress while accessing the short-break service. Their achievements are celebrated with them and their families. As a result, their confidence grows.

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

The children who stay at the home have various health needs. These are understood and managed well. Children's time at the home is supported by clear, concise risk assessments and behaviour support plans.

Medication is stored securely in the home and the process for children's medication coming into the home is robust. The administration of medication is reviewed by the manager to ensure safe practice. Staff have suitable training to administer medication and their competency is regularly assessed by managers. Staff have

bespoke training for each child with epilepsy, which is delivered by a specialist nurse.

Children are happy and safe at the home. Parents feel their children are well cared for and staff take time to ensure that parents also feel supported. One parent said to their child's social worker, 'It's like a breath of fresh air, the staff are nonjudgmental, and I love going there.'

Staff understand children's behaviour plans, which set out de-escalation strategies. Holding or guiding a child is a last resort and only used when necessary to keep them safe. All incidents are recorded in detail and then reviewed and monitored by the manager, so that behaviour plans can be updated and any learning can be shared.

Although there have been no safeguarding concerns, staff have received mandatory training and additional training in areas including child sexual exploitation, which ensures that staff understand safeguarding practice and procedures.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is qualified and experienced. He is well supported by two deputy managers. Together, they lead a staff team that works cohesively and is aspirational for every child accessing the service.

The home is sufficiently staffed by a team that is largely qualified. Those staff who do not have a relevant qualification are training to secure this. Staff have completed all mandatory training and any additional training that is specific to children's needs.

Staff receive regular reflective supervision, which gives them an opportunity to discuss their training and development needs. Annual appraisals are a two-way process and include feedback from children and external professionals. Monthly team meetings are well attended and are an opportunity to discuss children's progress and any changes in their care planning.

The manager monitors and reviews all areas of practice in the home. The use of an online platform to share and celebrate the progress of children allows parents to interact with staff in real time. One parent, whose child was previously isolated, has commented on a number of photographs. One comment said, 'The smiles say it all, [name of child] is so happy.' Despite the wealth of information available, the manager is not making full use of this to analyse and improve practice. The manager's review of practice could be more evaluative and set out actions with clear timescales.

Leaders and managers secure feedback from children, parents and external professionals. This demonstrates satisfaction with the service, and the only improvement requested is an increase in capacity. Feedback from children using 'you said, we did' is only demonstrating how this is applied to individual choices

around meals and activities. Managers could extend this to consider its impact on the service as a whole.

Managers work closely and proactively with multi-disciplinary teams to deliver the best service to children. They ensure that children's plans are clear and linked to their local authority plans.

Managers work hard to build trusting relationships with parents so they feel confident leaving their children for their stay. Managers include parents in the care planning and service delivery for their children. One parent said that they are considered the expert in their child's care and their views are listened to and acted on.

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

- The registered person should ensure that children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. The registered person should take into consideration the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- The registered person should consider the analysis and evaluation of the information and data recorded in the review of the home. The report should clearly identify any actions required for the next six months of delivery within the home, how those actions will be addressed and when they will be completed or reviewed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- The registered person should ensure that all areas of the home, specifically the garden, are accessible for all children to support their physical, mental and emotional health. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

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: 1247670

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: West Cumbria Care and Support

Registered provider address: West Cumbria Care And Support, 26 Stanley Street, Workington CA14 2JD

Responsible individual: Catherine Parker

Registered manager: Mark Swanston

Inspector

Sarah Jackson, Social Care Inspector

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