

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 owned by a charitable organisation and provides care under short-break arrangements for up to four children with learning disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2025.

Inspection dates: 27 and 28 August 2025

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: 3 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2025	Full	Good
20/03/2024	Full	Good
25/01/2023	Full	Good
10/10/2022	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff understand children's needs well. They recognise how children prefer to communicate, which helps strengthen their day-to-day experiences and supports them in making good progress. Many children have been accessing the service for several years, which allows staff to establish trusting relationships with them and their families. Staff are helping one child who visits the home to make good progress with their personal care, and they are helping another child to develop their language skills.

The manager plans children's transitions into the home well. Children are invited to look around the home with their family members before staying for tea and eventually staying overnight. Where possible, the manager arranges for children to stay with friends from school. This offers children the opportunity to participate in sleepovers that they otherwise would not experience. The manager also arranges for one child to stay in the home alone when this best meets their needs.

Staff encourage children to participate in activities such as bowling and going to the theatre. This provides children with experiences that they would otherwise be unable to access. Memories of these events are captured in photos that are displayed on the walls of the home and an online platform that children and members of their family can access.

Staff provide good support to children as they approach adulthood. Staff and the manager liaise effectively with professionals to help children with a smooth transition to adult services, including children who are moving into an alternative care provision. Staff continue to support these children until they are settled. This helps children feel valued by the staff who care for them.

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

The children have complex health needs related to their disabilities. Staff who are new to the service learn how to administer specialist care to children under the supervision of a medical professional. Longer-serving staff receive regular refresher training. This helps to ensure that staff have the most up-to-date knowledge to provide safe care.

Staff and the manager support children well when they make allegations against adults. Throughout any investigations, staff listen to, believe, and support children well. The manager uses social stories to help children understand the outcomes of any investigations. This helps children feel valued and safe.

Staff have a good understanding of the children's vulnerabilities and the associated risks. Staff and the manager respond well to new and emerging risks, for example, by revising children's care plans and providing staff with protective equipment. However, not all documents that help staff understand children's needs reflect all known risks for children,

and some contain outdated or irrelevant information. This does not affect the quality of care provided to the children.

The manager exercises a safer recruitment process. This helps to ensure that children are cared for by adults who can provide safe and effective care.

Staff rarely use physical interventions with children. When they do, they are often guides. However, staff do not always have the opportunity to reflect on physical interventions with a senior staff member. This prevents staff from feeling consistently supported and prevents the manager from identifying any patterns or trends. Children are rarely spoken to after they have been involved in a physical intervention. This prevents children from understanding the reasons for interventions.

Staff and the manager do not record consequences. This prevents the manager from ensuring that consequences implemented by staff are proportionate and appropriate.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is committed to providing good-quality care to the children. She is ambitious for them and expects high standards of care from the staff. She is supported by two deputies, who are equally enthusiastic. The manager knows and understands the children's needs well.

The manager takes decisive and effective action when there are delays in effective planning by other agencies. For example, she refused to provide care for one child until she received the necessary paperwork. This ensures that staff have all the relevant information they need to provide the standard of care required.

Staff absences are affecting the staff team. Staff work overtime, and managers and leaders work shifts to ensure that children receive safe and effective care. The manager is recruiting staff to address this shortfall.

Staff supervision sessions do not always take place in line with the organisation's policy. This prevents staff from being able to reflect on their practice and results in them not feeling consistently well supported. Records of supervision sessions do not always capture the full discussions held. This prevents staff and those providing supervision from being held to account.

The manager does not inform Ofsted of significant events within the required time frames and does not provide updates on the outcomes of investigations. This prevents the regulator from being assured that the manager and staff are providing safe care to children.

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 prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out— The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the name of the child; details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result 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	15 October 2025

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)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that children are supported in understanding the reasons for any physical interventions and that all staff are spoken to when they have been involved in any incidents. Furthermore, in line with Regulation 35, the registered person must ensure that all consequences are recorded.	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that supervision sessions take place in line with the provider’s policy, are reflective in nature, adhere to the standards expected by the provider, and are accurately recorded.	15 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious incidents are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate parties. Notifications must include details of the actions taken by the home’s staff in response to the incident. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home’s policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. (‘Guide to the Children’s Homes Regulations, including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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: 26 Stanley Street, Workington CA14 2JD

Responsible individual: Catherine Parker

Registered manager: Courtney Smith

Inspector

Julia Hagan, Social Care Inspector

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