

1278022

Registered provider: Independent Living Services (North West) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a limited company. The home provides care and support for up to two children who are no longer able to live at home.

The registered manager has been in post since registration on 25 April 2018. She also manages another home for the company.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people are thriving in this warm, caring and nurturing environment. They enjoy very positive relationships with staff which are built on mutual respect. One social worker said that they were 'blown away' by the high levels of professionalism and compassion shown by staff towards their young person.

Another social worker said that they were impressed by staff's commitment to 'going the extra mile' for young people. This, they said, was evident in the excellent progress that young people are making.

Care planning is meticulous and celebrates the uniqueness of each young person. Some plans would benefit from streamlining with the removal of information that is no longer relevant. Staff's in-depth knowledge and understanding of each young person's needs and interests mean that these are consistently met well on a daily basis.

Young people are flourishing with particular regards to their confidence, self-esteem and emotional well-being. They enjoy taking part in lively debates and going to the gym with staff.

Young people's emotional health and well-being has significantly improved since coming to live here. Staff are trained in play therapy and dyadic developmental psychotherapy. They skilfully weave specific elements of their training into their daily interactions and support provided to young people. This provides young people with bespoke care that is tailored to their needs. A parent said that the changes in their child's behaviour were 'unreal' and that their relationship with them had greatly improved because of the support that they received.

Staff are aspirational for each young person's education. They work tirelessly to ensure that the young people receive the right support and are in the correct educational placement to support their learning. A parent said that their child now has plans for their future.

Young people have a strong voice in the home and are consulted on all aspects of their care and support. Staff are innovative in how they record young people's daily experiences, for example creating a 'blog' for young people so that they can record their memories.

Support for young people moving on from the home is effective. Consultation with them and their families about where they want to live is excellent. Consequently, young people who have moved on from the home settle quickly into their new routines, have maintained their educational goals and continue to do well. This support has significantly improved the young people's life choices.

Young people enjoy much-improved relationships with their families and friends. This has resulted in young people being able to stay with family and enjoy special events with them. Parents are complimentary about the support that they and their child receive.

Parents spoke of the dramatic changes in their child, commenting that they are calmer and more able to listen to others which is amazing.

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

Contextualised safeguarding is at the heart of everything that the staff do. They continually reflect and analyse situations to consider any environmental factors and extenuating circumstances that have had an impact on the child or young person. This enables staff to think creatively to reduce these issues and revise the support that they provide.

The incidents of young people being missing from care have dramatically reduced and are now rare occurrences. Parents said that their children now had a sense of safety and could talk to staff about anything that was worrying them.

The police missing from care coordinator is very complimentary about the registered manager and staff. They said that the registered manager provided insightful training to new police officers about young people who are in care. This enabled the officers to consider their approaches to young people who are missing.

Staff make effective use of online videos to open discussions with young people and have in-depth discussions about moral dilemmas. As a result, young people are much less anxious and are more able to consider how their behaviour can impact on others. Incidents of poor behaviour have significantly reduced. This is recognised by parents and social worker as a massive achievement for the young people and has helped them to engage with their families and their education.

Young people live in a warm, family home. They take pride in their bedrooms which are designed to their individual tastes. One young person moved to a smaller room as they felt more comfortable here. This has enabled them to feel safer and to sleep better. One young person is in active discussions with staff about having a pet and where this could live. They are eagerly researching what would be possible and the care needs of their chosen pet.

Staff recruitment and vetting are rigorous. Young people are actively involved in the recruitment of new staff. Young people compile questions that the registered manager asks the applicants and then comment on their answers.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by a highly committed enthusiastic registered manager, who is supported by her equally enthusiastic deputy manager. Together, they have built a strong foundation on which the staff and young people can flourish. The registered manager said that they 'are the influencers and the guides to help young people navigate through their lives'.

The registered manager places a strong emphasis on staff development. Staff have access to an extensive range of training opportunities and receive good-quality professional supervision and support.

Research is key, and all staff are actively involved in bringing in new ideas and ways of working to the team. Team meetings are dynamic and informative. The five-minute briefings provide staff with the opportunities to consider a new piece of research and how this may be applied or to explore their unconscious bias. Consequently, staff are able to reflect and to critically analyse their own practice which helps them to bring about change.

Staff are very knowledgeable, experienced, highly skilled and motivated. They are tenacious, resilient and do not give up trying to make a positive difference to young people's lives.

Thorough external scrutiny by an independent person and comprehensive reviews of the quality of care help the registered manager to make improvements that benefit young people.

A key strength of the service is the commitment of registered manager, deputy and staff to working in partnership with others. They are not afraid to challenge other professionals when they feel that a young person is not receiving the right support. For example, the registered manager arranged a multi-agency meeting in a very short time frame to address this issue around a young person's education. This happened, and the young person is now in a new educational placement.

Recommendations

- Case records must be dated by the author of each entry. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that is helpful to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3 & 14.4) In particular, the removal of information from the young people's plans that is no longer relevant.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: 1278022

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Independent Living Services (North West) Limited

Registered provider address: Lakeside, Prescott Road, St. Helens, Lancashire WA10 3TP

Responsible individual: Patricia Neil

Registered manager: Emma Thornton

Inspector

Chris Scully, social care inspector

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