

1278968

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides short breaks for children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 20 and 21 November 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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 February 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2024	Full	Good
22/03/2023	Full	Outstanding
23/03/2022	Full	Outstanding
18/11/2019	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff have a detailed understanding of the children's individual and emerging needs. The team is child-focused and committed to offering the best quality of care to the children. This is shown through staff's warm, nurturing and therapeutic approach. Staff provide children with lots of interaction, play, laughter and experiences that can be repeated in their home environments.

There is a strong culture of inclusion within the home. Children are sensitively matched to enrich their experiences. Equally, when appropriate, staff talk with children about their perceptions and views. This allows children to develop their sense of self, form friendships and understand the richness of equality and diversity in their communities.

Children benefit from spending time with each other and are able to develop creative socialisation skills. There is a wide range of resources available from arts and crafts, board games, musical instruments and a recently created cinema room and sensory room. Children spend a lot of time outdoors, going to local beauty spots. Children have a choice in shaping their experiences at the home and plan activities as a group. This promotes children's confidence, interaction and social skills.

Children's wishes and views are given priority. They are included in all aspects of their care planning, from initial care planning and in expressing their desired outcomes. Feedback is sought regularly, and direct work sessions are detailed and personal to the individual needs of the children. Children feel valued and respected.

The staff work closely with the children's family to strengthen relationships. They do this through a programme of individualised sessions. Parents and carers can also access the provider's parenting course. One parent said: 'The support has been fantastic. The course gave me insight and made me look at my behaviours and reactions to my child. We get on much better.' This provides families with the emotional and practical support to apply in their homes.

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

Staff know and understand children's risks. They work closely with stakeholders to ensure that children receive the support they need. This includes a meeting with the child, their carer and their social worker before they access the service. This meeting ensures a mutually agreed plan of action. Risk assessments are reviewed weekly to ensure they are meeting the child's needs. This approach is inclusive and allows the child's full participation in their care and keeps them safe.

There has been a significant safeguarding matter that has evidenced the critical importance of information-sharing from stakeholders to inform risk assessments. This has been clearly escalated to leaders and a response sought in a timely manner.

Managers have comprehensively reviewed current procedures within the home and made changes to increase children's safety. Both children and their carers are fully informed and give consent before the children stay.

Children quickly build trusting relationships with staff and feel safe during their time at the home. Feedback from children and their families is excellent. One child said: 'It was one of my safest environments at a really difficult time in my life. Being able to stay for the weekends was amazing for me; they helped me so much.'

Children staying at the home do so on a voluntary basis and they are given time to consider the expectations and boundaries. As the children want to be at the home, this has resulted in exceptional outcomes. No children have been reported missing, and there have been no incidents of self-injurious behaviour or the use of physical intervention to keep children safe, despite these being known risks for the children. Children feel safe and receive stability from the adults caring for them.

Since the last inspection, there has been an occasion when children's care and experiences could have been compromised by them not having their agreed short break. However, managers worked effectively to devise a plan to reduce the impact on all concerned. This was communicated and enabled the children to be offered alternative options and receive the quality of care agreed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is led by a committed and highly experienced manager who is forward-thinking and provides inspirational leadership. He is supported by two assistant managers who support the operation of the home effectively. Managers have a clear ambition for each child and are passionate about the quality of care that is provided.

The members of the staff team are skilled and have a wealth of experience. Staff who have recently been employed bring their experiences from other settings. This adds value and enthusiasm to the whole staff team. The team cares deeply for the children. Staff speak with enthusiasm about the children and the outcomes they have achieved. One staff member said: 'There has never been a day when I haven't wanted to come to work'.

Proposed changes to the service have caused some uncertainty within the staff team. However, staff say that they feel fully supported and valued and morale remains high. Staff are motivated because of the leadership style and the focus on children's needs being paramount. Therefore, because of this child-focused practice, children's lived experiences are enriched.

Regular, purposeful team meetings take place. These are valued meetings and provide staff with opportunities for constructive reflection on practice. The manager has been influential in developing staff practice and approaches. Bespoke training is sought to

enhance staff's ability. Consequently, staff are equipped to meet the diverse and emerging needs of children.

Managers strive for positive working relationships with family members and professionals. Feedback is extremely positive. One professional said: 'The staff team are fantastic. They are consistent with the children and adapt their style of work to meet the child's needs. The direct work completed was really impressive.'

Managers have taken on board the findings at the last inspection and have developed a more robust level of oversight. Audits are being undertaken and learning shared with the staff team to strengthen practice and achieve consistency.

There are no requirements or recommendations set at this inspection.

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: 1278968

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: Steven Searle

Inspector

Angeline Clarke, Social Care Inspector

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