

2617662

Registered provider: Cumbria County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority-owned home is registered to provide care for up to four children who are likely to have experienced emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The statement of purpose details the age range of children and young people as being from 12 to 17 years.

The manager registered with Ofsted when the home was registered in March 2021. The manager is suitably experienced and qualified, possessing a level 5 award in children's residential management. 'Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the home opened in April 2021, four children have moved into the home at a staggered pace. This has enabled the manager to fully assess the children's needs and likely compatibility with each other. Consequently, children mostly get along well together and some have made good friendships.

Children share positive and meaningful relationships with staff. Children are treated with dignity and respect and, in return, children mostly show the same level of respect to staff. Children enjoy staff's company and share lots of laughter and easy banter. One child described their relationships by saying 'Staff are boss', a slang term for excellent.

Children's health and well-being are prioritised. Staff are proactive in ensuring that children's health is appropriately assessed and access the right support for them. Children understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle, so they eat well, take exercise, and avoid the use of illegal substances.

Staff actively support and encourage children's education and learning. All children attend education and are making good progress. As government restrictions eased when this home opened, the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has not interrupted children's education since coming to this home.

Children enjoy a good range of activities both in and outside the home. Children and staff together enjoyed a seaside holiday this year with activities such as go-karting, skating and swimming. A large paddling pool was also purchased for the garden so that the children could continue to enjoy having fun during the good weather.

Children know that they have a voice in this home. They regularly contribute their ideas for improving the home and are given freedom to decorate and furnish their bedrooms with their favourite things, which promotes their individuality and identity.

Children also know how to complain if they are unhappy. Despite children being satisfied with the outcomes, complaints are not routinely well recorded to demonstrate the accurate response to the complaint made.

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

Children are clearly very happy in this home and feel increasingly safe with staff as their relationships develop. One social worker commented, 'Staff are really proactive, [child's name] speaks so positively of living here.'

Staff fully understand the children's individual needs and vulnerabilities and plan for their safety, both in the home and outside. Children's risk assessments are well constructed and understood by staff, who are proactive in their safeguarding. Risk assessments are reviewed regularly, and risk reduction is evident.

There have been two occasions when a child has been missing from the home. These occurred shortly after the home opened and staff dealt promptly and effectively with each incident, ensuring that children were welcomed back to the safety of the home. These incidents are a reflection on how happy and settled children feel.

Staff help and support children to work through their feelings and anxieties in a calm and measured way to avoid negative behaviours escalating. Staff have a sound understanding of children's behaviours and likely triggers for such behaviour and have planned how to effectively manage these. Consequently, there have been no physical interventions required in this home.

Sanctions are occasionally used in response to poor behaviour. Some sanctions appear a little punitive at times, rather than restorative, but the record is not sufficiently detailed to be clear. Additionally, there is no evaluation of their individual effectiveness, but use of sanctions is becoming much rarer.

Recruitment practice is robust and promotes children's safety. All staff are thoroughly checked and vetted prior to their appointment, reducing the likelihood of unsuitable adults working with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is effectively led and managed. The manager was appointed almost a year prior to the home opening. This has facilitated the development of the home prior to opening and her relationships in building a strong, qualified and experienced staff team.

The home is working in accordance with its statement of purpose. However, some detail remains inaccurate that was noted at the home's registration visit. A requirement has been made for this to be updated.

Staff spoken to confirmed good morale within the staff team and have a shared ethos to improving the lives of the children they care for. Staff believe the quality of relationships achieved with children has so far been instrumental in the good outcomes the children have achieved since their starting points.

Staff say they feel well supported and have been impressed with the manager's ability to achieve such a compatible group of children in this home. Despite the children all being very individual, they have blended well and accepted each other's distinct personalities.

Staff support, including regular supervision, staff meetings and training events have been successful in bonding them as a team, as well as supporting their personal development and practice.

Internal and external monitoring arrangement are proving effective. The manager's regular monitoring and internal audits are successfully charting children's progress and the continuing development of the home.

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, 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— keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	22 October 2021
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; a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; and	22 October 2021

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)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c)) This specifically relates to any sanctions children receive.	
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3)) Specifically, ensure that the record is comprehensive, dealing only with the issues raised and reflects children’s views concerning the outcome.	22 October 2021

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: 2617662

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Cumbria County Council, Cumbria House, 117 Botchergate, Carlisle CA1 1RD

Responsible individual: Lynn Berryman

Registered manager: Julie Elder

Inspector

Gillian Walters, Social Care Inspector

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