

2702602

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council – Children’s services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children’s home

A local authority operates this home under short-break arrangements. It provides care for up to four children with learning or physical disabilities, including sensory impairment.

The manager registered with Ofsted in September 2024. The manager returned from a period of planned absence in September 2025.

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 February 2026

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: 13 March 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2025	Full	Good
04/05/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The registered manager and staff support children well. They care for children and help them to make progress in all areas of their lives.

Children have positive relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the children's individual needs. This helps staff to meet the children's needs well.

The registered manager and staff ensure that children live in a safe environment where children are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings. The home environment is warm and welcoming and includes specialist equipment to meet children's individual needs. There are many photos of the children displayed, giving children a sense of belonging.

Some areas of the home require redecoration. However, this does not impact on the care staff provide for children.

Children are introduced to the short-breaks service at a pace that is right for them and their families. Staff spend time getting to know the children when they visit the home. One social worker said in relation to their child, 'Staff supported a long transition building up to an overnight.'

Staff maintain good communication with children's families. Families are complimentary about the high levels of effective care their children receive, and the support provided to them by staff. One family member said, 'They go out of their way to make sure the kids' needs are met.'

Children have opportunities to enjoy their individual interests, such as watching music videos, playing in the garden, relaxing in the sensory room, playing with cuddly toys, and going for walks. One social worker said, '[Name of child] gets involved in loads and loads of activities and I get regular photos.'

Children's achievements are celebrated by staff and families.

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

Children who stay at the home have various health needs. These are understood and managed well by the manager and staff.

Staff receive specialist training to support the children's complex health needs. One family member said, 'Staff received stoma training from the stoma nurse.'

Medication is stored securely. The processes in place are safe. The registered manager has strengthened procedures and oversight of administration of medication following identified errors to ensure safe practice.

There is good multi-agency working. The registered manager and staff work closely with professionals to ensure that children receive appropriate support. One social worker said, 'Staff have liaised with us and parents. They were very conscious about things needed to support the stay.'

Children benefit from a nurturing and structured environment where positive behaviour is actively promoted. The registered manager and staff use individualised strategies to support the children to manage their emotions. There have been no negative consequences recorded since the last inspection.

Managers and staff consistently review and update children's individual risk assessments and care plans. Staff understand children's risks and vulnerabilities. However, there have been occasions when risk management plans and care plans have not always been followed. On one occasion, strategies identified to reduce the risk for one child were not implemented. As a result, the child was able to access items that posed a risk to them.

Safer recruitment processes are followed, which means that staff are recruited safely. Recruitment checks ensure that only suitable staff are employed to work with children at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has recently returned to the home following a period of planned time off. The registered manager is dedicated, caring and ambitious. She ensures that she is present in the home and accessible to children and staff. Two dedicated deputy managers work together to support the registered manager, staff, and children.

Since the last inspection there have been shortfalls in management oversight. This improved when the registered manager returned to work. The registered manager has implemented systems, which has strengthened her oversight. This helps the manager understand the areas to improve.

Staff are supported through regular reflective supervision. This provides staff with the opportunity to reflect on their practice and consider any development opportunities. Staff meetings are informative and include training to support the individual needs of the children.

The manager and staff maintain good levels of communication with other professionals. Professionals speak highly of the manager and staff. One social worker said, 'Communication is really great. Staff will communicate to me if there are any concerns.'

The registered manager has not updated the home's statement of purpose in line with regulation. The home's workforce development plan does not include all required information. This has not impacted on the care of children.

The registered manager has assessed the suitability of the home to ensure that children live in a safe area. However, the appropriateness and suitability of the review of premises assessment does not include consultation from relevant people and consider identified risks. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to fully evaluate the suitability of the home's location.

Ofsted has not been notified of all serious incidents without delay. This could impact on the regulator's oversight 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, 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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(v)(vi)) The registered manager must ensure that staff understand and implement identified strategies to support children as identified in the risk management and care plans.	10 April 2026
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or	10 April 2026

there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e)) The registered manager must ensure that Ofsted is notified in line with regulation.	
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2)) The registered person must ensure that when completing the review of appropriateness and suitability of the location, requirements in regulation 12 are considered. This specifically relates to identified risks. The registered manager must ensure that consultation with relevant people takes place, and that relevant professionals are consulted.	10 April 2026
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)) The registered person must ensure that the statement of purpose is kept under review and a copy of the revised statement of purpose is sent to the regulator. The registered manager must ensure that details of staff experience and qualifications are included within the statement of purpose.	10 April 2026

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the fabric of the home is well maintained. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan that can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: 2702602

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council – Children's services

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 78, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Tracey Sykes

Registered manager: Mary McDonough

Inspector

Stacey Ilaboya, Social Care Inspector

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