

2730932

Registered provider: Westmorland and Furness Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this home. It is registered to provide care for up to six children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted in April 2023.

At the time of this inspection, five children were living at the home. Four children spoke with the inspector as part of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 July 2025

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: 13 August 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

An assurance visit took place on 4 March 2025 in response to a safeguarding notification in February 2025 when a child lit a fire inside the home. The inspector identified serious and widespread concerns in relation to safeguarding practices and ineffective leadership and management arrangements. Compliance notices were issued under regulation 12, the protection of children standard, and regulation 13, the leadership and management

standard. A monitoring visit on 15 April 2025 found that the provider had taken sufficient action to meet the areas in the compliance notices.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/08/2024	Full	Good
22/08/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's moves into the home are well planned. Detailed and child-focused plans have supported two children to move to the home recently. Shared activities and overnight stays have helped children to develop relationships with staff and with other children already living at the home.

Older children moving out of the home have been well prepared for their independence. Staff have continued to provide support appropriately.

Children's health needs are well met. Staff are considerate in how they support children with sensitive health issues. There has been good support and progress for one child to improve their physical health. Staff have been creative in supporting children to exercise in a fun and creative way. Due to another child's health needs they have been supported to move to a ground floor bedroom.

Staff support children to engage in education. Staff have produced a chart to support a younger child to complete tasks around reading and spellings. A staff member trained as an invigilator to help an older child to complete their exams at home.

Children are encouraged to try new activities. This includes individual activities like crown green bowls and joint games like swing ball. Staff worked hard to make children's school proms special for them and are planning holidays which reflect the children's interests.

There is good support for children to spend time with their family where it is safe to do so. Children have been able to cook and enjoy food together with their family. The manager has employed a member of agency staff from a similar background to children to help support their identity.

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

The manager now uses a newly developed template to assess the impact and risks for new children moving into the home. The assessments have been thorough and have supported robust decision-making. This includes consideration of staff skills, the environment and how children will be supported to live together.

Staff understand the risks for children and how to reduce them. Risk assessments identify clear strategies for staff to use to support children's behaviours. There are planned sessions with children to help them to understand how to keep themselves safe. Staff have meaningful conversations with children to help them to reflect on their behaviours and the impact on others.

There is a positive dynamic in the home, which demonstrates how staff are supporting children to live together. Children have not gone missing from the home, and there has been no need for staff to use any physical intervention to support children's behaviours.

The manager has received training which relates to the risks for one of the children living in the home. Staff are yet to receive any training in this area. A specialist consultant is assessing the child and has started to discuss a diagnosis. The manager contacted the consultant during the inspection to enquire about specific training for staff once the assessment is completed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is reflective. Positive changes have been made since the last inspection. The manager shared how improved assessment processes for moves into the home have led to positive outcomes for children. She also described the benefits for staff who have relished the opportunities to care for younger children.

The manager has good oversight of the home. She is proactive in challenging other professionals, where appropriate, to reduce delay for children. The manager has taken appropriate steps to address with professionals such as the police and the local authority designated officer any concerns that the management and staff have for the children. However, there was a delay in notifying Ofsted of a serious incident for a child. An allegation made by a child against a member of staff was not notified and was recorded incorrectly.

Staff feel that the home is more settled. They feel well supported in their roles by the management team. This is reflected in staff supervisions, which show the care and advice given to staff around their practice and with their personal circumstances. The manager shared a shortfall around the supervision of staff in April, during which some sessions did not take place due to staff sickness and leave. This was addressed in a timely way.

Team meetings are focused and give staff clear instructions to follow. While meetings are not reflective, there are plans in place to support this with monthly reflective group supervisions with the team. There are clear plans in place for the development of the home with positive progress being made in some areas.

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 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 there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. A notification made under this regulation— must include details of— the matter; the other persons, bodies or organisations (if any) who or which have been notified; and any actions taken by the registered person as a result of the matter; must be made or confirmed in writing. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii)(e) (5)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(b))	31 August 2025

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff have skills and knowledge around the individual and specific behaviours to support children in strategies to manage and reduce risks. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)

Information about this inspection

The inspector has 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: 2730932

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Westmorland and Furness Council, Town Hall, Duke Street, Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria LA14 2LD

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Curtis

Registered manager: Cheryl Athersmith

Inspector

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked-after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2025