

2733281

Registered provider: Cumberland Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to six children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home and manager registered with Ofsted on 1 April 2023.

Five children were living at the home at the time of this inspection. The inspector spoke to three of the children.

Inspection dates: 13 and 14 August 2025

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: 20 November 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/11/2024	Full	Good
07/11/2023	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have built trusting relationships with the staff who care for them. Staff regularly have discussions with children about things that are important in their lives. Children say that they feel able to talk to the staff. This helps children to share their worries and feelings.

The manager carefully considers all new referrals to the home to ensure that the needs of all of the children can be met. Children are welcomed into the home following a planned introduction to the environment, staff and the other children. This supports children to start to develop relationships and to become familiar with their new home before they move in.

When children move on from the home, staff support them to have positive endings. Staff work closely with children and their families, which has supported two children to return to live with their family. Where one child has needed further support, staff have been consistent. One parent said, 'Staff couldn't have done anymore.'

Staff support children to attend school. When one child has struggled with education, staff have worked effectively with professionals to resolve issues. Staff are proactive in working with professionals to explore alternative provisions, and another child is being supported to return to education. One parent said, 'My child's education has improved since moving to the home and they are now motivated to attend.'

Staff support children to develop their independent living skills in preparation for leaving care. They teach children to learn about budgeting, cooking and managing daily tasks. When children become competent in their independence skills, they are able to carry out more complex tasks. For example, one child has been supported to build a bed and create a gym at the home. This helps children to feel confident and prepared for independence.

The home looks tired in some areas and needs attention. Repairs to the home have not been completed in a timely manner, including damage that has been caused at the home.

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

Children's risk assessments are kept up to date. Individual risks are clear and include a history of incidents. This makes it easier for staff to see patterns and changes in children's behaviours. There is a clear action plan for staff to follow to help them identify triggers and put interventions in place to reduce risk. This helps staff to keep children safer.

Staff know how to respond when a child is missing from home. They follow the risk assessment to support them to return. When the child has returned to the home, staff work with them to better understand the reasons for going missing and offer them support. This has led to a reduction in episodes of children going missing from home, and no children have gone missing since May 2025.

Since the last inspection, there have been no incidents involving the use of physical intervention. Staff work with children to help them find alternative ways to express their frustrations and manage their emotions. This includes involving children in their own crisis management plan. This helps staff respond to incidents in a way that is helpful to the child.

When children make allegations against staff, the manager completes an investigation. This is followed up by working with multi-agency professionals to give the child an opportunity to speak to an independent person. The children's needs are carefully considered, and restorative work is offered between the staff and the child. This helps children to feel listened to.

Staff reinforce positive behaviour at the home and talk to children about expectations of behaviour. Children say that they understand why consequences are used and agree with this. This helps children to reflect on their behaviour and learn from it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is run by an experienced manager who knows the children well. The management team is committed to supporting children to achieve the best outcomes. The manager is ambitious for the future of the home and wants to continuously improve the care offered to the children. This supports a nurturing culture at the home.

Staff say that they receive regular supervision sessions and feel supported by a strong management team. Supervision sessions support staff with their emotional well-being, and they are provided with an opportunity to reflect and learn from incidents at the home. This provides staff with an opportunity to learn and develop their skills.

The manager builds effective relationships with multi-agency professionals. Leaders and managers are proactive in escalating issues and advocating on behalf of the children. One professional said, 'Staff advocate for [name of child] well and make sure that their voices are heard.' This helps children to get the right support in a timely manner.

There is a stable, experienced staff team. Staff receive the training that they need to perform well and meet the children's ever-changing needs. Training goes beyond the core learning to provide staff with specific knowledge about children's individual needs. This is further strengthened by staff receiving support from therapeutic services. This helps staff to provide effective care for children.

There are gaps in recruitment checks for new staff. In particular, suitable checks into their employment history have not been carried out. This prevents the manager from verifying the staff's suitability to care for children.

The manager has an audit process in place, which provides her with good knowledge of the areas for development and the strengths at the home. However, this information is not used effectively, and learning from the audits is not fed through to actions and staff meetings. This limits opportunities for further learning and reflection.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (2)(a) (3)(d))	2 October 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that the children's home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of the children. the home should be a homely, domestic environment. In particular, maintenance to the home must be actioned in a timely manner. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards' page 15 paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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: 2733281

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cumberland Council

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

Responsible individual: Elizabeth Curtis

Registered manager: Louisa Boswell

Inspector

Natalie Clark, Social Care Inspector

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