

2791215

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by the local authority and provides short breaks for children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in August 2024

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 January 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	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 February 2025

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2025	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff create a nurturing and responsive environment for children accessing short breaks. Personalised support promotes positive behavioural changes, strengthens family bonds and helps children develop essential life skills. This adaptable and empathetic approach ensures that children feel respected and supported, contributing to increased self-confidence.

Parents consistently highlight the positive and transformative impact of the service, particularly in boosting their child's confidence and helping them manage their child's needs more effectively. One parent commented, 'They brought hope and light back into our lives.' The trusting and collaborative relationships built by staff benefit both children and their families.

Children are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities that promote emotional wellbeing and personal development. Families are welcomed into the home to join enjoyable activities with their children. One family were invited in for Christmas dinner together to have an experience they may not have been able to achieve without the support from the service. Parents have reported improvements in family relationships since their children began attending short breaks.

Staff maintain a strong focus on children's holistic wellbeing, addressing both immediate concerns and long-term aspirations. Children work towards personalised goals and participate in support sessions individually and with their families. This approach has led to meaningful improvements in children's lives. Parents feel more confident and capable in supporting their children through challenges.

Staff have created a homely and comfortable environment each child has a large double bedroom with their own en-suite bathroom when they stay. One child said about their stay, 'I loved it!' Children enjoy coming to stay in the home.

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

Each child has a detailed and regularly reviewed risk assessment covering a broad range of potential concerns. These assessments equip staff to respond effectively to individual needs, including managing triggers and identifying risks, which helps ensure children's safety.

Staff manage self-harm incidents effectively, using a range of resources to support the children involved.

A medication error was promptly addressed through a fact-finding process and the implementation of new procedures. This has been successful in preventing any further incidents.

Staff are well trained in safeguarding procedures and understand the importance of working with relevant partner agencies to address any safeguarding concerns. Their commitment to child safety is evident throughout their practice.

Children are eager to stay at the home and are given time to understand expectations and boundaries. This has led to good outcomes. No children have gone missing from care, and there has been no need for physical intervention. Children feel safe and receive consistent, nurturing care.

Staff use a therapeutic approach to behaviour management, helping children feel secure and supported. As a result, children behave positively and enjoy their time at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home benefits from a dedicated and supportive management team that upholds extremely high standards of care and staff development. A member of staff said, 'My manager is very good, person centred and child focused – a very well-rounded person. They are very approachable.' Managers encourage a collaborative and open working culture, ensuring that staff feel valued and supported. This contributes to a positive and effective care environment.

There has been a change to the services that the home offers, as part of a larger redesign of residential services in the local authority. A professional said, 'One of the brilliant things that has happened is the merging of the two services. It means they can offer both outreach support alongside the overnight stays, which is really helpful for families.'

Regular team meetings support effective communication and reflective practice, helping ensure consistency in the team's work with children and families.

Training is thorough and varied, equipping staff with the skills and knowledge needed to meet children's needs. This includes specialist training tailored to the specific requirements of the children. The manager is confident in the quality and breadth of training available.

The staff rota is designed to ensure a balanced gender mix and align staff interests with the children staying each weekend, which helps build strong, positive relationships.

Staff receive structured individual supervision focused on professional growth. All staff hold a Level 3 NVQ or equivalent qualification. The team is stable, morale is high and there is a clear ambition for progression.

Staff's annual appraisals are completed, but they do not incorporate feedback from children or other stakeholders to strengthen reflective practice.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should include the views of the children and other professionals when completing appraisals with staff. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: 2791215

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 100, Preston PR1 0LD

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspector

Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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