

SC034158

Registered provider: Cumbria County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and run by a local authority. The home provides care for up to four children and young people with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in May 2022.

Inspection dates: 21 and 22 March 2023

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 9 March 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2022	Full	Good
23/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
11/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
19/01/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

One child currently lives in the home and is receiving excellent care from a dedicated staff team. Three children were previously supported in the home with short-term placements. All three children successfully moved to permanent long-term placements.

Staff have strong working relationships with the child's social worker, independent reviewing officer and family. Working together has improved the outcomes for the child. A social worker said, 'The child has made so much progress at this home. The difference is amazing.'

The child experienced an extremely positive move into the home. This is because staff provide a high level of individualised support. Before the child moved in, the manager met with the child and stakeholders, gathering information on what was working well and what needed to improve. Consequently, comprehensive moving-in plans were created that supported the child to have a fresh start.

The child's views, wishes and feelings are central to the running of the home and have informed the plans that have supported progress. The manager and social worker implemented a plan for change. This plan helps the child to review progress and set clear goals for the coming month. The child said, 'This helped me focus. I feel that I inform my care and that staff can give me guidance to achieve what I want.'

The child is making excellent progress in their education. Since living at the home, the child's attendance has dramatically improved, and they are making remarkable progress. They are on track to achieve qualifications by the time they leave the home. As a result of these achievements, the child has opportunities to succeed and has ambitions for their future. The child said, 'I never thought I would ever go to school. Staff believed in me, and now I believe in myself.'

The manager and staff are very passionate about forming positive relationships with children. Staff go over and above to support the child to keep in touch with people who are important to them. This has successfully supported positive experiences for the child and their family.

The manager consistently works with therapeutic support. This has supported the staff team to sensitively help the child process their thoughts and feelings safely. A care package has been introduced in the evening to help the child overcome any feelings of anxiety. The child has a mindfulness colouring book and a mood bear, which have supported them to settle.

Staff consistently work hard to maintain and improve on the progress that the child has made. As a result, the child's emotional resilience has grown, and they have become fully integrated into the local community. For example, the child has taken part in a theatre production, is enrolling in police cadets and is looking at college placements.

The home environment is clean and well presented. However, all the internal doors have locks on them. This detracts from a homely environment.

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

Managers and staff prioritise the safety of the child. Leaders, managers and staff are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities. The child's risk assessments are detailed and reflect current risks and strategies for staff to follow. This keeps the child safe and has helped them to flourish. Staff are trained in safeguarding. Managers discuss with staff their understanding of safeguarding in team meetings. This promotes an effective safeguarding approach.

The child is well cared for, and the manager and staff have excellent insight into the background and current needs of the child. This understanding has been enhanced through regular support and advice from an emotional health practitioner. As a result, the child receives care that is targeted and well informed.

Managers and staff understand the risks to the child when accessing online content. The manager ensures that the child and staff complete training about keeping safe online. Consequently, the child has successfully kept themselves safe when they are online or using their devices.

The child living at the home does not go missing. This is exceptional, given their starting point. The manager has strong links with the local police. This ensures that vital information about the child would quickly be shared, ensuring the child would be located as soon as possible if they were to go missing.

The child is involved in their own care plans, which helps them navigate their therapeutic journey. Staff do this by helping the child identify goals and to take calculated risks in line with their progress, for example moving towards independent time or trying a new hobby. The child explained with enthusiasm what needs to happen for them to move to the next stage.

The recruitment of staff is thorough and means that all staff are suitable to work with children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She provides strong and effective leadership to a highly motivated staff team. The manager, the staff and, most

importantly, the child can clearly demonstrate the positive impact that living in the home has had on enhancing the child's life chances.

The manager recognises the importance of continuing to drive improvements. They continually share good practice suggestions with the staff team. This includes inviting professionals into the home from other agencies in support of the child's preparation for moving into the home and their ongoing development.

The manager creates a supportive environment that enables staff to challenge and express their views. Staff receive regular and effective supervision. The staff are experienced and either hold or are working towards the relevant childcare qualification. Staff enjoy their work and are very proud of the child and their outcomes.

Staff complete a broad range of high-quality training courses to enhance their skills and knowledge. Research-informed practice continues to develop firm foundations for the home's care. This is making an exceptional difference to the life of the child.

Effective relationships with families are firmly in place. Comments and feedback are welcomed and very much encouraged. There are extensive feedback forms, so the manager has a comprehensive understanding of the views of children, parents and other agencies. This supports the development and review of the child's plans.

The registered manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She actively uses monitoring tools and action plans to demonstrate how she is listening to ideas to continually improve the quality of care that staff provide for the child.

The manager and staff have excellent relationships with stakeholders. The child's professionals gave unanimously positive feedback about the home and the care they receive. One social worker said, 'They are fantastic. They have been central to supporting the child's journey and progress.'

The manager conducts appraisals with staff on an annual basis. Staff reflect on their work and set targets for the year ahead. However, appraisals do not include the views of children or key individuals. This limits the manager's understanding of children's experiences and the ability of leaders to make improvements.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that staff appraisals include the views of other professionals who have worked with staff over the year and the views of children who have been cared for at the home. ('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: SC034158

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cumbria County Council

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

Responsible individual: Lynn Berryman

Registered manager: Kayleigh Gregory

Inspector

Jennifer Quest, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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