

SC035428

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a number of homes operated by the local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people.

Inspection date: 18 September 2018

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: 29 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: not judged

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/05/2018	Interim	Not judged
26/03/2018	Interim	Not judged
02/03/2018	Interim	Not judged
28/03/2017	Interim	Not judged

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, 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(g)(ii)(h))	26/10/2018

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about their care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Direct work must take place, which relates to matters that are significant to the child. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Currently, there is one young person living at this home. The young person has some complex needs and there are specific concerns relating to their care and support. The young person receives highly individualised care at this home and as a result is making good progress in a number of areas.

External professionals who are involved in the care of the young person are highly complimentary about the care and support that the young person receives. A social worker commented, 'I cannot express how impressed we are. They [staff] have been fantastic in balancing the young person's needs and risks.'

Since moving to the home, the young person has started to engage positively in education. They have been supported to join a college course, which is in line with their interests. This provides an opportunity for the young person to achieve, to build positive friendships and to gain qualifications.

The manager works positively with the young person's family and ensures that staff closely support contact with them. This helps to ensure that the young person benefits from spending time with the people who are important to them.

The young person enjoys good experiences on a day-to-day basis. Staff support them to engage in hobbies and activities that they like, as well as trying new activities. The young person regularly engages in pursuits such as boxing and spa days and spoke positively about these experiences.

The young person benefits from ongoing one-to-one work with staff, during which the young person is encouraged to share their thoughts, wishes and feelings. Some aspects of this work could be improved. More effective planning of one-to-one work would ensure that areas significant to the young person are regularly addressed. This would support the young person's progress further.

The young person is due to move to a new placement in the near future. The manager and staff have worked closely with external professionals to assist in the planning of this transition, to help to ensure that the young person continues to receive safe and effective support following their move.

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

The arrangements to protect and safeguard the young person are effective. The young person reports that they feel safe and well cared for. They know how to complain and can share their concerns with the manager and staff.

The manager and staff work closely with partner agencies to maintain the young person's safety. External professionals describe the manager as highly effective and are complimentary about her contribution to multi-agency planning. They report that risks to the young person's safety and well-being are well managed.

Good safeguarding practice is not consistently underpinned by robust risk assessments. Some risk management plans lack clarity or contain conflicting information because they have not been properly reviewed. However, in discussion, staff demonstrate good understanding of the actions that they need to take to safeguard the young person on a day-to-day basis. This demonstrates that the shortfalls are in relation to recording rather than practice.

There are clear procedures for staff to follow in the event that the young person goes missing. These include going out looking for the young person and contacting all relevant professionals. On one occasion, concerns were identified about the staff response when the young person was missing from the home. Managers have investigated this matter and have ensured that the relevant learning is cascaded to the staff team.

The young person is encouraged to behave in a manner that is safe for them and for others. An individual behaviour management plan enables the staff to support the young person in a consistent and positive way. This helps the young person to develop an understanding of safe and appropriate behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a manager in place at the home who has made an application to Ofsted to be registered. The young person and their parent spoke highly of the manager, describing her as 'lovely' and 'the best'.

External professionals gave highly positive feedback about the management of the home. A social worker said of the manager, 'She has a brilliant overview of the young person's care planning.'

A complaint was recently made regarding an incident involving the young person. It was confirmed that the manager and a senior manager from the organisation have taken appropriate action to investigate and address the concerns raised. However, a clearer record of the investigation and subsequent actions taken would help to ensure that any potential learning is not lost and that communication with the complainant is in line with the home's complaints procedure.

Staff report that they feel well supported by the management team. Staff benefit from regular supervision, team meetings and the opportunity to reflect on practice. The home has experienced some staff absence recently, which has in part been covered by using agency staff. The manager has ensured that the use of agency staff has been carefully planned so as not to affect the consistency of the young person's care.

The manager demonstrates a good understanding of the strengths of the home and the ability to identify areas for improvement. However, a more effective use of internal monitoring processes would help to ensure that shortfalls, for example those identified in some risk assessments, are identified in a prompt manner.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and young people and their families. In addition, the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC035428

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: PO Box 78, County Hall, Fishergate, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Paul McIntyre

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Marie Cordingley: social care inspector

Jessica Forshaw: social care inspector

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