

SC035428

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides short-term care for one child who may have social and emotional difficulties and physical disabilities.

The manager registered with Ofsted in April 2022.

One child lived at the home at the time of the inspection.

Inspection dates: 25 and 26 June 2024

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: 31 October 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/10/2023	Full	Outstanding
25/01/2023	Full	Good
18/10/2022	Full	Inadequate
07/12/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The home is registered for one child. However, an additional child moved in as an emergency before Christmas. Although the child only lived there for a short time, they had an enjoyable Christmas before moving to their permanent home. One child remains living at the home.

Staff have ensured that this purpose-built bungalow has a welcoming feel. There are photos of the child throughout the home, alongside their artwork. This makes it feel like the child's home. A lock was on the kitchen door; however, this was removed during the inspection.

The child has the use of two bedrooms. One of which is a smaller room which at times meets the child's needs. However, their larger bedroom has been locked and used for storage. This means that the child has not been able to freely enter their room and have access to their possessions, including their clothes.

The child continues to be unable to attend school. Despite not attending school, the child is doing well academically. The child is fully invested in their timetable and taught by home tutors. The child enjoys writing stories and has recently achieved a high grade in their mock exam. The child has high aspirations for their future. The child's education is a priority for the manager and staff.

Staff ensure that the child's health needs are well met. Several different services are involved to support the child's physical and emotional needs.

Staff fully support the child's time with their family. There are occasions when the child's mum stays overnight. This ensures that the child's relationships with those that are important to them are respected and promoted.

Staff capture happy memories of the child's experiences in a memory book. The child has enjoyed lots of activities including meals out, day trips and has even raised money for charity by completing a sponsored walk.

Staff consult with the child regularly and the child's views are central to their care planning. The staff and child regularly engage in conversations that support the child to expand their thinking and knowledge of the world.

Despite the many restrictions in place for the child, the staff work with the child to develop their practical independence skills. This support is important to ensure that the child has the skills needed for when they are older.

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

The child's safety is paramount for the staff team. The child's safeguarding needs require a robust multi agency approach. Care planning is constantly subject to review and monitoring.

The child has restrictions in place as part of the safeguarding strategy. The restrictions are reduced or increased, as required. The manager and staff work closely with the child and others to plan how to reduce restrictions. However, following an incident, the child has not been able to use the kitchen for six months. Since this time, there has been a lack of proactive planning and consideration to support the child to be able to use this area safely.

The use of restraint is rare. However, on the occasions that it has been used, staff talk through the incident with the child. This means the child can express their views and feelings. The manager reviews and evaluates each incident to ensure that interventions are necessary and proportionate.

There has been a significant increase in the child raising concerns about the staff, both individually and as a team. The manager and other professionals work closely together to manage these allegations. There are agreed plans in place to ensure the child's safety.

Incidents of self-harm are high and have resulted in many hospital visits. As a result, the manager has worked with the hospital and social worker to agree a hospital reduction plan. The manager and staff know the child well, which has led to the plans beginning to have an impact.

When safeguarding incidents occur, leaders and managers respond appropriately and swiftly. They ensure that they make immediate changes to care practice to improve risk management. Staff ensure that following significant incidents, discussions with the child enable them to think about how they were feeling, who was affected and how they can move on from a situation.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified. An assistant manager supports her and the senior leadership team offer an additional layer of support. The management team have strong relationships with the child and are very much involved in the day-to-day support of the child.

There have been some changes to the team since the last inspection, however the team remains stable. However, the regulator has not been informed of these changes which limits their oversight of the home. There has been a reduction in the need for

agency staff to support the permanent staff team. This provides added consistency for the child.

Staff say they feel supported and receive regular supervision. The manager prioritises staff wellbeing and she ensures that there are support systems in place. However, staff employed as bank workers and agency staff are not supervised. This is a missed opportunity for the manager to assure herself that the staff have the skills and experience needed to support the child effectively.

The manager leads a committed and child focussed team. Regular team meetings ensure that the staff have the information they need to support the child effectively and reflect on their practice.

The manager ensures that staff have received the relevant training they need to provide a good quality of care. This means they have the skills to provide effective care for the child.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and development areas for the home.

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 ensure that— the privacy of children is appropriately protected; children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises— is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21 (a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)) In particular, this relates specifically to children being allowed to access their bedroom where their belongings and clothes are stored. This further relates to the child being allowed access to the kitchen.	16 August 2024
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must— (a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and (b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.	16 August 2024

(Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b))	
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Recommendation

- The registered person must have systems in place so that bank staff and agency staff receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC035428

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: John Simpson

Registered manager: Jeanette O'Neill

Inspector

Kerri Lynch, Social Care Inspector

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