

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035428
Inspector	Jackie Line
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Lancashire County Council
Registered person address	PO Box 78 County Hall Fishergate Preston PR1 8XJ
Responsible individual	Brendan Francis Lee
Registered manager	Karen Margaret Banks
Date of last inspection	18/12/2014

Inspection date	27/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The purpose of this visit is to assess the progress made since the last inspection in December 2014, and how this has impacted on the quality of care and outcomes for young people.

Parents and professionals continue to demonstrate high levels of confidence in staff, and in the quality of care afforded to young people. For example, one parent comments they 'never have any complaint', and a social worker says: 'The staff go above and beyond to meet the needs of young people, and I only receive positive feedback from parents whose children access the service'. As a result, staff at the home maintain very good standards of care, and young people continue to flourish within an environment which offers them support, stability, and fun.

Young people attend the service for planned short breaks, and they continue to benefit greatly from their positive experiences at the home. Young people are afforded a range of social opportunities, and consequently develop friendships with their peers. A parent reports: 'Respite provides my daughter with her social life'.

Individually tailored care plans are in place, and this ensures that young people are cared for consistently according to their personal needs. Young people's achievements are celebrated, and staff have a good overview of individual progress and areas for development. This means young people benefit from encouragement and support which helps them to reach their full potential.

Some young people are making the transition to adulthood, and staff contribute well to this process. Effective working relationships with partner agencies means that future support services are well informed about young people's needs. This ensures care planning is robust, and transition arrangements are as smooth as possible.

The one requirement raised at the last inspection has been addressed. Casual staff now receive supervision, and they will have an annual review of their performance. As a result, all staff have their progress and performance formally reviewed to aid their professional development. Furthermore, systems are being developed to ensure that young people's views inform the appraisal process, and this demonstrates improvements in practice in this area.

The management of the home is consistent and effective, and there have been some improvements to the internal monitoring of records between inspections. As a result risk assessments have been reviewed, and they now provide clear and up to date information. Furthermore, records are routinely signed and dated. This demonstrates that when areas are identified for development, action is taken and this drives improvement forward.

One complaint has been investigated, and concluded between inspections. Because the Registered Manager does not keep a clear record in the home, the inspector sought external verification to ensure the complaints process had been completed correctly. Without accurate records the regulator and the independent visitor cannot easily review events, and this does not fully promote the safety and welfare of young people.

Arrangements for the recording and administration of medication are safe. An area identified for improvement is in the handling of medication, particularly when this is received at the home from a parent, via school. In respect of one young person it is not clear what medication staff can expect to receive when he arrives for a short break, or how and where this has been stored prior to arriving at the home. This increases the risk of discrepancies, and does not represent wholly robust practice.

Two requirements have been made at this inspection, to further improve practice.

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home operated by a local authority. The service offers short-term care breaks for up to four children and young people with physical disabilities, young people with learning disabilities and young people with sensory impairment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/12/2014	Full	good
28/01/2014	Interim	good progress
15/08/2013	Full	outstanding
16/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
21 (2001)	ensure the registered person makes suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medications received into the children's home, specifically that there is a review of arrangements for receiving medications into the home from parents via school (regulation 21(1))	30/04/2015
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation (regulation 24(5)).	30/04/2015

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.