

SC035439

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural needs.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 April 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 7 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
08/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/07/2017	Full	Good
08/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 protection of children standard The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; and manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)(iv))	29/05/2019
The leadership and management standard 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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	29/05/2019
The care planning standard The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(2)(a))	29/05/2019

Medicines The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child; and a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)(b)(c))	29/05/2019
--	-------------------

Recommendations

- Staff must help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
 Specifically, ensure that written plans outline young people's needs and detail how young people are being prepared for independence.
- Under Regulation 6 (3) it is expected that in establishing whether the care meets the child's needs, the child will be appropriately supported throughout the care and given opportunities to discuss the impact of the care, or any changes they feel they might need to it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 18, paragraph 3.31)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. 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)
- Specifically relating to staff de-briefing. Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control,

discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of Regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should detail the process and timescales for supervision of practice (see Regulation 33 (4) (b)) and keep appropriate records for staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Emergency admissions have had an adverse effect on some young people. Managers have not made effective use of impact risk assessments, which has led to some young people being admitted who are not well matched with other young people already living at the home. The young people's needs were not carefully considered prior to their admission to the home and as a result their placements were unstable and broke down.

Young people are making mixed progress. Some young people are attending school regularly and all have access to a broad range of community-based activities. One young person has been supported to get a part-time job, which has increased their self-confidence and is an important step towards their independence. Another young person has made a successful transition to a semi-independent placement and is working part-time while attending further education.

Care plans are not consistently person-centred. They lack important information about young people's support needs and fail to outline proactive strategies. For example, one young person regularly refuses to take her prescribed medication, but there is no guidance for staff about how to support her in this area.

Young people's bedrooms are personalised and some improvements are being made to the communal areas of the home. Young people have been involved in making choices about the redecoration. One young person is taking an active interest in the garden and is assisting staff to make it better. Further work is required to make the environment homelier.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff have safeguarding training and are aware of their responsibilities to protect young people from harm. Safeguarding concerns, such as disclosures made by young people, are responded to promptly. Consequently, actions are taken to address concerns and minimise reoccurrence.

There have been incidents of significant bullying, which have had a negative impact on some young people's well-being. Staff attempt to manage situations as they occur, although their responses are inconsistent. For example, one young person was encouraged to agree to a safe word, which she could use to discretely alert staff if she felt intimidated by other young people. However, not all staff members were aware of this word when spoken with by inspectors.

There is little direct work with either the victims or perpetrators of bullying. In addition, there are shortfalls in the way that bullying incidents are logged and monitored. This means that managers, staff and external professionals do not have a clear overview of the frequency and severity of incidents. Furthermore, opportunities to identify patterns or trends are missed.

Each young person has a range of risk assessments and risk management plans are in place, which provide staff with guidance in how to maintain young people's safety. Where these relate to young people's behavioural needs, they lack individualised strategies despite some young people presenting with highly complex behaviours. On one recent occasion, staff failed to follow guidance in a young person's behaviour support plan, which caused a situation to escalate.

The number of incidents of physical intervention that take place in the home are not excessive. All such incidents are recorded and monitored in a satisfactory manner. Appropriate debriefing takes place with the young person and any staff involved in the incident. However, staff debriefing could be better evidenced by ensuring that records are in place to confirm it has been completed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There is a suitably qualified and experienced manager who has been registered since October 2018. The registered manager demonstrates a person-centred approach as well as good insight into the home's strengths and areas for development.

Staff are carefully recruited and undergo a comprehensive training programme to help ensure that they have the skills and knowledge required to carry out their roles effectively. Staff spoken with said that they felt well supported and were complimentary about the training that they received.

Staff are provided with formal supervision, which enables them to discuss areas including personal development, performance and any concerns that they may have.

There are some examples of well-planned, supportive discussions which address pertinent areas for young people. However, shortfalls were identified in relation to the frequency of supervision. It was noted that some staff members had not received supervision in accordance with the timescales as set out in the organisation's supervision policy.

There are processes in place to enable the registered manager to monitor standards of safety and quality on a continuous basis. However, these are not used in a consistently effective way. Some shortfalls identified during this inspection had not been previously identified. More effective use of quality monitoring would help to ensure that areas in need of improvement are promptly identified and addressed.

Systems are in place so that all relevant people are informed of significant events that occur. Ofsted are notified appropriately of relevant incidents at the home and this demonstrates that action is taken, in partnership with relevant agencies, to protect young people's well-being.

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: SC035439

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: John Simpson

Registered manager: Sian Buckley

Inspectors

Marie Cordingley: social care inspector

Sophie Thomson: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2019