

SC035459

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 breaks for children with special educational needs and/or physical disabilities.

The home registered with Ofsted in 2003, and the manager registered in April 2012.

Five children were present at the home during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 17 and 18 February 2026

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 2 October 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/10/2024	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2024	Full	Outstanding
07/02/2023	Full	Outstanding
08/03/2022	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children enjoy their short breaks and receive exceptional care from a stable and experienced staff team. Children develop positive, trusting relationships with staff who care about them. Staff create a nurturing and calm environment where children thrive.

Staff work hard to develop positive working relationships with parents to share knowledge, understand children's interests and discover how best to support children. This helps children to experience a well-planned and positive transition into the home. One family member said, 'It was a really nice transition and done at our pace.'

Children are provided with opportunities to develop skills, take part in activities, and gain independence during their time at the home. These positive experiences enhance the quality of the children's lives and improve the overall progress children make.

Staff use a variety of communication aids to interact with the children and help them communicate more effectively, for example picture exchange communication systems, social stories, visual aids and signing. This helps the children to learn, form social relationships, express feelings, and participate in everyday activities.

Communication with families is excellent. One family member said, 'I love the communication book. It's easy to jot down important things that might not seem important but to [name of child] they are big things.' This gives families a chance to feel more connected to their child and celebrate what they have achieved during their stay at the home.

There is good multi-agency working. The manager and staff maintain excellent levels of communication with other professionals. One social worker said, 'There is excellent communication, which supports the team around the child.' This ensures consistency for children.

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

The home is maintained to a high standard. It is homely and welcoming. The home environment is personalised to meet each child's individual needs during their stay, and this includes books they may like, their favourite bedding and adaptations in their bedroom to create a safe environment, including specially designed window coverings. Children's photographs are displayed around the home. This provides children with a sense of belonging.

All children have comprehensive risk management plans that clearly identify known risks and vulnerabilities. These plans give clear instructions to staff about how risks to children should be safely managed. This helps to ensure that staff respond consistently, and risks are reduced.

Children who stay at the home have various health needs. These are understood and managed well by staff. Managers and staff complete a range of training that focuses on meeting the children's individual needs. Staff apply their training effectively when supporting the children. Training includes medication, epilepsy, oral suction, creative play, and vagus nerve stimulation.

Children receive excellent support to help them if they are upset. Staff understand the triggers and functions of children's behaviours and how to respond. Where restraint has been used, this has been minimal, necessary, and proportionate. On one occasion, the child did not have the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint. This is a missed opportunity to talk to the child about the incident. feelings.

Recruitment procedures and practices are safe and effective. Children have been involved in the interview process for new staff by devising specific questions and reflecting on responses received. These checks ensure that only suitable adults are employed to work with children in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is suitably experienced and qualified and is supported by an assistant manager. They work exceptionally well together and have developed a positive, child-centred culture in the home. Managers are passionate, aspirational, and knowledgeable about the needs of the children. They strive to make continuous improvements to ensure that children receive exceptional, individualised care.

The children's records are comprehensive and accurate. The records reflect the children's everyday lives and the work that is carried out with them during their stay. The managers and staff have developed child-centred plans that are written for the child.

Reflection is embedded into everyday practice. The manager and staff complete detailed reflection following incidents to support development and learning. One social worker said, 'Staff will relook at strategies. There was a period when mornings were difficult, so staff changed how they did things and now there is no issues.'

Staff team meetings are regular and effective. Team meetings include training elements and direct links to research to help support and guide practice. Staff receive ongoing support, supervision and constant guidance from leaders and managers. One staff member said, 'The manager is approachable and really supportive.'

The manager has a comprehensive understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the operation of the home. The manager has close oversight of children's progress and any changes needed. Internal and external monitoring of the home is effective.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, taking into consideration the communication needs of the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 50, paragraph 9.60)

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: SC035459

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 100, Preston PR1 0LD

Responsible individual: Tracey Sykes

Registered manager: Johnpaul Adamson

Inspector

Stacey Ilaboya, Social Care Inspector

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