

SC035477

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 9 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 27 June 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

'There are currently two young people living in the home, but only one of the young people has lived at the home for the majority of the period since the last inspection. He has made exceptional progress in many areas, due to the high-quality, individualised support he receives. His parent commented that she had never seen him so happy and settled, and strongly felt that this was due to managers and staff at the home.

Staff explained that from the outset of the young person's placement, they focused strongly on building positive relationships with him. They spoke of taking time to understand the young person's anxieties and fears, and the plan to concentrate on promoting his emotional well-being. An external professional from a young people's specialist health service supported this information and commented that, through really taking time to understand what was important to the young person, staff had enabled

him to develop meaningful relationships and experience real progression through therapeutic care.

The young person spoke extremely highly of staff. He said, 'They do everything to help me. They are all top standard. This is the best place I have ever been.' When asked what made it the best place, he said 'them' (the staff).

Staff have supported the young person to rebuild important family relationships. They have worked hard to develop positive communication with the people that matter to the young person. One relative said, 'They have not only helped [X], but they have helped me too. I feel involved and I feel like I matter. I have nothing but good things to say about them.'

The young person arrived at the home with a history of being missing and engaging in high-risk behaviours. Staff took the time to understand the drivers for these behaviours, and worked positively with external professionals to support the young person. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in the young person's high-risk behaviours and incidents of him being missing from home are rare.

Records show that, since the last inspection, there have been no instances where staff have been required to carry out physical interventions or restrain the young person. This demonstrates the staff's skills in de-escalating potentially volatile situations, and is a further indication of the progress made by the young person since his admission.

The young person has engaged in education for the first time in several years. During his stay at the home he has obtained some level 1 qualifications, and is working towards the next level. He has had the opportunity to sample a college placement, and is now making positive plans for his future.

The young person's social and emotional development have been strongly supported during his stay at the home. In addition, medical professionals have noted significant improvements in the young person's physical state and growth rate. The young person has engaged in learning with staff around healthy lifestyles, and mealtime planning and preparation, as part of his independence work.

It has been identified that the young person will soon move on to a semi-independent setting and he is currently being supported to prepare, both practically and emotionally, for this step. Some of the work being carried out to assist him in this preparation could be more clearly recorded within his care plan. This would help to ensure that the support is consistent. A recommendation has been raised in relation to this.

In recent weeks, a second young person has been admitted to the home. The young person has some complex needs and there are some risks associated with her care. Records demonstrate that highly effective planning and positive working with a variety of external professionals have taken place to help ensure that her care and support are effective. Risks have been carefully considered and clear measures are in place to help maintain the young person's safety. A social worker involved in this process commented,

'I think the experience in the staff team is really evident in how they have approached the admission of this young person. They have been so professional and on the ball with every aspect, from the initial risk and impact assessment, to the individual needs of [X] and her care plan.'

During the short time the young person has lived at the home, she has engaged well and is developing positive relationships with staff. Measures are in place to ensure that there is a high level of review regarding the young person's support. These include fortnightly multi-disciplinary meetings.

The home continues to be effectively managed. Staff are highly motivated and well supported. They demonstrate clear commitment to providing high levels of support for the young people in their care.

The registered manager continues to effectively monitor safety and quality across the service and takes action, where necessary, to address any issues identified. Two recommendations were made at the last inspection of the home in relation to the interviews that are provided for young people following missing episodes, and the home's workforce development plan. It was confirmed during this inspection that both recommendations have been suitably addressed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2017	Full	Good
12/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
06/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
18/05/2016	Full	Inadequate

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.

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. This support must be individually planned and recorded in young people's internal care plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: SC035477

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Lancashire County Council, PO Box 78, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Paul McIntyre

Registered manager: Michael Nunn

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

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