

SC035477

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority home that provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have complex emotional and behavioural needs.

There is a manager in post who was registered with Ofsted in June 2018.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 19 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/11/2018	Full	Good
08/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/06/2017	Full	Good
12/01/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The specific responsibilities of the home towards supporting the health and well-being of each child should be agreed with the placing authority and recorded in the child's placement plan. It is the joint responsibility of the registered person and the placing authority that this is agreed at the time of placement. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.7) This is specifically in relation to smoking and smoking cessation.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who live in this home have complex needs and have usually experienced multiple placement breakdowns previously. They often have difficulty in developing positive relationships with carers. A strength of the home is the ability of managers and staff to engage these young people in a manner that supports them to make positive progress. As a result, young people's placements do not break down.

Parents and external professionals are consistently complimentary about the home. A parent said, 'I couldn't ask for a better home or better people to look after my son. He is more settled than I ever dared hope he would be.' A social worker described the team's approach as 'highly child-centred and nurturing', and commented, 'They really understand the impact of previous trauma on young people.'

Managers and staff work closely with community healthcare workers to support young people's emotional well-being. They show strong insight and a clear understanding of young people's therapeutic needs. This promotes positive relationships between staff and young people and supports young people's progress and well-being.

There is a culture of high aspiration for young people. There is highly effective communication with education professionals, and managers advocate strongly for young people to ensure that their individual provision meets their needs. A more structured approach to supporting the learning of young people who are in receipt of a reduced provision would further promote young people's progress.

Individual direct work with young people is of the highest quality. Sessions are carefully planned to address areas that are important to young people. Staff encourage young people to explore their thoughts, wishes and feelings and, where possible, they ensure that these are considered when planning their care.

Detailed transition plans help to ensure that young people are practically and emotionally prepared for their next steps. On some occasions, transition plans have included ongoing support from staff to assist young people in settling into their new environments.

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

Young people are supported by an experienced and committed staff team that knows them well and has a clear understanding of the risks associated with their care. A combination of consistently positive support and good relationships with staff has helped a number of young people to reduce high-risk behaviours and make safer choices.

Strong collaboration with partner agencies promotes young people's safety and well-being. The manager ensures that any concerns are immediately escalated and that there is a multi-agency approach to risk management. An external professional specialising in child exploitation described the home as 'one of the best that they have worked with'.

Risk assessment is of good quality. Risks are clearly identified and there is clear guidance for staff regarding the action they must take to maintain young people's safety. Risk management plans are regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain current and reflect any new information.

Staff engage well with the police, social workers and families to safeguard young people who go missing. Well-detailed records evidence extensive efforts staff make to locate young people and ensure their safe return.

Staff have a good understanding of young people's behaviours. They understand when young people may behave in a certain way and why. Staff are skilled in de-escalating challenging situations and, as a result, there are very few incidents that reach crisis point or require staff to physically intervene.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

There is a manager in place who has been registered with Ofsted since June 2018. The registered manager and his team demonstrate high aspiration for the young people in their care and a strong commitment to improving young people's lives. An external professional said, 'I cannot offer enough praise for their commitment and dedication to the young people.'

Before any new young people are introduced to the home, the manager carefully considers their needs and any potential impact on the existing group or the stability of the home. This process, along with the commitment of managers and staff to stick by young people through difficult periods, means that young people's placements do not break down.

Highly effective care planning and strong partnership working ensure that young people receive care that meets their individual needs. The manager advocates robustly on behalf of young people and demonstrates the ability to challenge any external services that are falling short.

Staff are highly motivated and positive about their role. They speak highly of the management team, describing them as supportive and approachable. The home benefits from a low staff turnover, which results in stability and consistency for young people.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive training programme and receive regular refresher training. Regular supervision and team meetings encourage reflective practice and support effective communication.

The manager uses quality assurance systems effectively to ensure that standards and safety are consistently monitored. He has recently developed the tools to provide an improved insight into young people's progress and experiences. He has a clear understanding of the strengths of the home as well as potential areas for development, and takes action to address these areas on a continuous basis. As a result, young people benefit from a constantly improving service.

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: SC035477

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: Jonathan Sewell

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

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