

SC035477

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care for up to three children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

At the time of the inspection, three children were living in the home.

The manager registered with Ofsted in June 2018.

Inspection dates: 19 and 20 March 2024

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	good
---	------

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

Date of last inspection: 23 March 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2023	Full	Good
22/03/2022	Full	Good
15/01/2020	Full	Good
19/11/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children receive good-quality care from an experienced staff team. Staff develop nurturing relationships with children and understand their needs well. As a result, children feel supported and can identify trusted adults in the home.

The home is warm and welcoming. Children are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms, which provides them with a sense of ownership.

Staff promote independence appropriately for children's stages of development. Where independence plans are met with resistance, staff support children to be reflective. This enables children to understand expectations and identify where they feel they need further support.

Children's relationships with family members and those who are important to them are nurtured by staff. This has resulted in all three children in the home reconnecting with family members with whom relationships had previously broken down.

Staff ensure that children's health needs are met, and they are supported to attend routine medical appointments. Where children have refused to attend, staff have discussed the importance of taking care of their health. This has helped staff to identify barriers to children's engagement and overcome these. Staff are proactive in seeking specialist support for children's emotional health to ensure that they receive appropriate care.

Before living in the home, children have experienced significant disruption in their education. Staff have worked hard to support children's reintegration into learning, which has resulted in two children attending school and enrolling in college. Both children have since disengaged with education; however, staff are proactive in sourcing alternative provisions. Children not currently accessing education have limited structure and routine in the home.

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

Children are provided with an individual approach to care, which the registered manager has identified works well for the relational dynamics in the home. Staff have a good understanding of the risks faced by children, which supports their ability to provide effective care.

Staff know the children well and can de-escalate situations effectively. Consequently, physical intervention is used as a last resort and is a rare occurrence in the home. Where children have been held by staff, this has been necessary to avoid the child causing harm to others or themselves. On one occasion, a child made a complaint to the registered manager when he did not feel that staff holding him was proportionate. The registered manager investigated this complaint thoroughly and

upheld that the hold was required. However, further training for the staff member was also identified.

The registered manager regularly reviews children's risk assessments, which consider and evaluate all known risks. The registered manager uses a monthly monitoring approach that enables him to identify any emerging patterns of concern. Staff are provided with clear strategies to reduce risks that are specific to children and their needs.

Staff are in regular consultation with specialist support teams that relate to the needs of children living in the home. Staff show professional curiosity and are keen to develop their understanding of children's behaviours and use therapeutically informed approaches to support them.

Two children in the home have a significant history of going missing from home. Staff work closely with children, family members and professionals to understand the reasons for children going missing. As a result, there has been a considerable decrease in incidents for both children. When children are missing, staff follow the home's missing-from-care protocols consistently. Despite this, there have been a small number of occasions where a child has not been seen for several hours before being reported as missing to the police. The protocols in place are not effective in every instance and require a review to ensure that children are not left vulnerable.

Staff respond well to incidents and there are clear records of actions taken to safeguard children. Although responses to incidents are effective and proportionate, the registered manager has not always reported incidents to the regulator in a timely manner.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced and dedicated registered manager who is assisted by two deputy managers. Staff enjoy working in the home and feel well supported by the management team. Regular team meetings take place, which ensures that staff are kept fully up to date about children's needs.

Staff access a range of face-to-face and online training that is reviewed regularly by the registered manager. This ensures that the staff have the skills to provide consistent care to children. Training that is specific to the individual needs of the children living in the home is prioritised. The registered manager is supportive of staff development and delegates tasks to staff members seeking to gain experience in leadership and management.

The registered manager has developed positive relationships with professionals working with children. Strong multi-agency working takes place to ensure that children receive appropriate support. Professionals speak positively of their engagement with staff and the quality of care provided to children. One personal assistant said that staff 'can't do enough' for their child.

The management team provides regular supervision for staff which is reflective and supports the development of the team. The registered manager ensures that staff receive annual appraisals, which are further opportunities to develop their practice.

The registered manager knows the children well and has clear oversight of the home through regular monitoring and review of staff practice. However, he has not identified some minor shortfalls in staff's recording and language used, which is not always child centred.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that when children are not participating in full-time education, they are supported to engage in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
- The registered person should ensure that clear, detailed procedures are in place when a child is missing from care and that staff understand their roles and responsibilities. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)
- The registered person should ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording on children's files. Staff should record information about children in a non-stigmatising way and use appropriate language that is helpful to the child. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that there is a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.13)

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: SC035477

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: John Simpson

Registered manager: Jonathan Sewell

Inspector

Carrie Mayes, 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 children looked after, 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 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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2024