

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC039673
Inspector	Jackie Line
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Lancashire County Council
Registered person address	PO Box 78 County Hall Fishergate Preston PR1 8XJ
Responsible individual	Brendan Francis Lee
Registered manager	Gwyneth Marie Monk
Date of last inspection	11/12/2014

Inspection date	03/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The home was last inspected in December 2014. It achieved an overall effectiveness judgement of good. Three recommendations were made to further improve practice and, at the time of this interim inspection, all areas identified have been addressed effectively. This demonstrates that the management and staff learn from inspection and drive improvements forward.

Young people live in a safe environment where they are protected from harm. Staff use good safeguarding practices to identify risk and implement protective measures to keep vulnerable young people safe.

Some young people are striving for independence and want to spend time away from the home in line with their age and development. Staff work exceptionally hard to ensure that this is well managed, appropriately risk-assessed and arrangements are regularly reviewed. Additionally, staff work closely with other professionals to ensure that information is shared appropriately in order to inform decision-making about these arrangements. Staff make sure they know where young people are and regularly undertake welfare checks to protect and promote their safety and well-being. A social worker comments: 'They have ensured that this young person does not place herself at risk which she previously did. They have been able to use tactics and techniques to ensure she has freedom whilst being kept safe.'

Young people's care is effectively planned and tailored to meet their individual needs. Staff and young people have developed strong relationships built on trust, consistent routines, boundaries and practice. Young people benefit from a committed staff team who actively support and encourage them to reach their full potential.

Managers and staff continue to work effectively to support young people to access

the most suitable education provision to meet their needs. Young people are making good progress and where they need additional support this is facilitated. For example, one young person received additional Maths tuition and as a result her confidence and attainment levels increased. One young person has recently commenced employment; this is an exceptional achievement and reflects the progress she has made. Young people are supported to pursue their individual interests such as ice-skating and guitar lessons. This means that young people's interests and talents are nurtured and they develop confidence and improved self-esteem.

The Registered Manager and staff are committed to developing new initiatives to support young people. For example, some young people recently participated in an independence project where they spent some time in a rented house with minimal staff intervention learning to support themselves. This was an ambitious project but it

was well planned and effectively managed. As a result, young people gained valuable insight into the challenges and responsibilities that come with independent living. Young people report: 'It made me learn that I'll have to do everything for myself without the support that I get usually. It was different as I've never had to budget my money, but it went well'. This initiative demonstrates the team are forward thinking and creative in engaging and helping young people to prepare for their transition to independence. Furthermore, the process was used to inform care planning in relation to the individual needs of the young people.

One young person has come to live at the home since the last inspection. They have settled in well and are making positive changes in terms of their safety, well-being and development. For example, missing from home episodes have reduced and they are slowly beginning to engage in education. This demonstrates encouraging progress.

Since the last inspection the manager has secured improvements through a revision of the admissions procedures. As part of the review, young people were consulted about the young people's guide and changes have been made as a result. All young people say they 'prefer the new book as the old book had too much info', and they 'like the way it gives quotes from other young people'. This shows that young people are listened to and are able to make a valuable contribution to the running of the home.

The management of the home is consistent and effective. The manager ensures that any issues arising from internal and external monitoring are quickly addressed. Improvements have been made to case records, and systems are now in place for casual staff to have an annual appraisal. The Registered Manager is pro-active in monitoring young people's progress and outcomes. This process allows for analysis and reflection and strengthens the home's commitment to improving the quality of care for young people. This has led to the introduction of bespoke therapeutic training for staff to help them to meet and manage the complex emotional needs of

young people. This enables the staff to continue to provide the very best of care to young people.

No requirements or recommendations arise from this inspection.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a local authority and provides care for up to six young people of either sex aged from 11 to 17 years. The home takes emergency placements. Placements are also available for young people bailed or remanded by a court.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2014	Full	good
11/02/2014	Interim	good progress
05/12/2013	Full	outstanding
24/01/2013	Interim	good progress

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.