

SC039673

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full 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. It provides care for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in December 2019.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
---	--------------------

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

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: 11 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
10/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Specifically, individual risk assessments should cover all known risk areas and should detail the control measures and strategies in place to safeguard the young person.

- Children's care plans should reflect that they are receiving care which meets their needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

Specifically, individual behaviour support plans should detail the known triggers for young people's behaviours and strategies staff should use to support the young person.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people are making outstanding progress. They receive personalised and responsive care from a staff team that knows them well. One young person said, 'I like it here. It feels like a proper family home. The staff are understanding, and they have all the time in the world for you.'

Young people live in a caring and nurturing environment. The consistency of the staff team has meant that young people can form positive and trusting relationships with staff over a sustained period. This gives young people a sense of stability and security, which they are thriving on. Young people speak highly of staff and enjoy spending time with them. One family member said, 'I can't fault them. It is a brilliant home. [Name of young person] has never been happier.'

Staff are aspirational for young people and understand the importance of education in securing positive outcomes for young people. As a result, young people are making significant progress in this area. Staff have successfully supported young people to re-engage with education and most young people now attend school regularly. Staff have encouraged young people to be ambitious and as a result many have clear plans for future careers.

Young people's wishes and views are sought and acted upon. Staff strive to ensure that young people are at the centre of the care planning process. For example, an easy-read

document called 'This is me' has been developed to capture young people's support needs from their perspective. This gives young people more control about the support they receive. The knowledge that they are listened to helps young people to feel respected and valued. One social worker said, 'The staff have treated [young person's name] with fairness and respect. They have really listened to her. She has made massive progress since living here and the staff have played a huge role in that.'

Young people are supported to pursue their hobbies and interests. For example, one young person goes horse riding regularly. Young people are encouraged to take part in community projects such as charity walks and collections for a local homeless project. This promotes community inclusion and a sense of belonging. Staff actively facilitate contact with family members. One young person has been supported to successfully re-establish contact and visit relatives who live abroad.

Young people are growing in confidence and becoming more independent. Staff are teaching them new skills such as budgeting, cooking and how to manage a bank account. Some young people are also starting to travel independently. The progress that some young people have made has meant that they have successfully returned to their family home or moved on to semi-independent placements. These transitions have been well planned and managed.

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

Young people feel safe and know that staff care about them. Young people said they were able to talk to staff about any worries they may have. One young person said, 'I've changed so much since being here. My moods are much better, and I am less depressed. I know I can talk to staff anytime and this helps me. I feel happy and safe here.'

Young people benefit from regular individual key-work sessions. These sessions are well planned and focus on the young person's individual risks and vulnerabilities. This provides young people with a forum for self-reflection and encourages them to talk about their feelings. Staff use creative methods to facilitate conversations with young people. They help young people to identify different strategies they could use to manage their feelings and emotions. One family member said, 'I have seen a big improvement in [young person's name]'s behaviours since she moved there. She used to be very angry but is calmer now. She is more able to regulate her emotions.'

Young people benefit from an experienced staff team that employs consistent approaches. Staff are skilled in positive behaviour support and as a result rarely use physical interventions to manage young people's behaviour. One social worker said, 'Staff respond well to young people and talk them down calmly or advise them rather than telling them what to do. Young people respond well to this approach.' However, some behaviour support plans did not contain enough detail about known triggers and the strategies staff use to support the young person. A recommendation has been made to address this.

Staff at the home have developed an innovative tool kit which they use to support young people who may self-harm. An assessment is completed with the young person to gain an understanding of their individual triggers and how they want staff to support them. Staff complete direct work with young people to help them to develop strategies to keep themselves safe. For example, they are encouraged to develop a personalised box of items that they feel may help assist them when they feel anxious. As a result of this approach, incidents of self-harm have reduced.

Young people feel settled and rarely go missing from this home. The manager has ensured that there are robust procedures in place for all young people in the event that they should go missing. These contain clear guidance for staff to follow, which means that they can respond swiftly and effectively to safeguard the young person.

All young people have risk assessments which are updated on a regular basis and after significant events. However, these documents do not always cover all known risks or the control measures in place to manage these risks. A recommendation has been made to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager has recently been registered with Ofsted. He has worked at the home for many years prior to his promotion and he is suitably experienced and qualified to undertake this role. The manager is child-centred and has a passion for ensuring that young people receive the support they need to fulfil their potential.

The manager is committed to ensuring that young people receive high-quality care that is tailored to meet their needs. There are effective and well-organised monitoring systems in place. This enables the manager to monitor the quality of care and address any issues quickly to improve practice. One social worker said, 'My experiences of working with [name of home] have been positive. I am confident that they are providing a high level of care and support to the young people.'

The manager is aspirational for young people and has promoted a culture of high expectations. He has a good understanding of their individual needs and is proactive in seeking additional support for them when required. He is a strong advocate for young people and is confident to challenge other services to ensure that decisions are made in the young people's best interests.

The manager leads an experienced and skilled staff team. All staff either hold nationally recognised childcare qualifications or are working towards them. The manager encourages staff to be innovative and to develop new ideas to shape practice within the home. Staff work collaboratively to provide consistency and stability for young people. Staff report that they feel supported both by the management team and by their colleagues.

Staff benefit from a comprehensive induction and training programme that is designed to equip them with the skills they need. Staff receive regular supervision, which gives them

the opportunity to reflect on their practice. There are effective internal communication systems in place, which means that staff work with young people in a consistent way.

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: SC039673

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspector

Sophie Thomson: 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 looked after children, 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 <http://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://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2020