

SC039673

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 children's home. This home is registered to provide care for up to six children. At the time of the inspection, there were six children living in the home.

The manager of the home registered with Ofsted in December 2019.

Inspection dates: 14 and 15 June 2023

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 15 June 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/06/2022	Full	Good
25/01/2022	Full	Inadequate
07/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children in this home say that they are happy. They like the staff, and they feel listened to. One child said, 'I like the staff, we have a mutual trust of each other.' This means that children are cared for by staff who they trust.

Staff work with children's families to support family time. The staff team builds positive relationships with children's families. A social worker said, 'They [the staff team] supervise contact with mum. Nothing is too much trouble for them; they go above and beyond.' This helps children to maintain important relationships, which support their sense of self and identity.

Children's behaviour is managed well. The stable, experienced staff team ensures that children have clear boundaries, and they are offered incentives for behaving well. This contributes to helping children to learn to make good choices for themselves as they grow up.

Not all the children attend mainstream school, but they are all receiving education of some form during school hours. Staff are creative in finding educational opportunities that fit children's needs.

Children are offered fun activities to do outside of school hours. Some of the children participate in organised football games with staff. This helps them to feel part of a team and build relationships.

This is a purpose-built children's home, and some elements of its design convey an institutional impression. The internal doors that lead to communal areas have locks on them that, if used, may prevent children from having access to all areas of their home.

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

All children have detailed individual risk management plans. The plans are regularly updated, and staff demonstrate that they understand children's risks. This helps to keep children safe.

Each child has a separate missing-from-home risk management plan. Records demonstrate that when children go missing, staff respond appropriately. They look for children and work with the wider system of professionals to help to locate them and bring them home safely.

Incidents when children have been at risk of harm are subject to thorough analysis by the manager. This helps staff to understand children's patterns and to introduce strategies that help to reduce future risks.

Incidences where staff have had to physically hold a child to keep them safe are low. When this has happened, the member of staff and the child have had a debrief with the manager or a member of staff. The low number of holds indicates that behaviour is managed well.

All staff have had training to help them to understand how important their immediate responses are to children who have harmed themselves. This has contributed to low incidences of self-harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is committed to the welfare of the children in his care. He has a clear vision for developing the service. He is very child focused, open to new ideas, and has a positive outlook on the influence that he and the staff can have on the children in their care.

Staff are offered regular supportive supervision, where they have good opportunity to discuss the children in their care. This benefits the children, as staff can reflect on how they are caring for them. When changes are identified through this process, they are incorporated into children's plans to improve the quality of their care.

There is an educative culture in the home. Staff are all qualified or are training for the relevant qualification. Staff are offered other training alongside this to help them to tailor their care to the children's needs.

Staff meet as a team twice a month. One of these meetings is a development session and one a keeping-in-touch meeting where staff can share their experiences. It benefits children to have a staff team that communicates well and offers them consistency of care.

Staff take the time to understand children's backgrounds, different cultures, and religious needs. Children's rights are understood and respected.

Staff have annual appraisals, which help to support their development. Children are invited to contribute to staff appraisals. This helps children to feel part of this process and that their opinion is important.

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

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that children can access all communal areas of the home as if it were a family home. This means that the need for the locks on doors in the communal areas should be reviewed. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.10)

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: SC039673

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

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

Responsible individual: Gwyneth Monk

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspector

Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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