

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 two children living in the home.

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

Inspection dates: 15 and 16 June 2022

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: 25 January 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

This home was judged inadequate at the full inspection on 25 January 2022. Following that inspection, three compliance notices were issued in respect of regulation 12 (the protection of children standard), regulation 13 (the leadership and management standard) and regulation 14 (the care planning standard).

At the monitoring visit on 7 March 2022, inspectors found that these notices had not been met. Three further notices were issued in respect of the same regulations.

At the monitoring visit on the 27 April 2022, the inspector found that all three compliance notices had been met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/01/2022	Full	Inadequate
07/01/2020	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have made good progress academically since the last monitoring visit. One child's education attendance has improved since they moved to the home. Another child has attended an interview at a college and has now been offered a place on their chosen course.

When children have struggled to engage with education or exams, the staff have offered practical and emotional support and worked effectively with schools to ensure that children have had appropriate help and guidance. One professional spoken to commended the staff for how they have helped one child to overcome their anxieties and enabled them to sit some of their GCSE exams.

Children's health needs are being met by the staff at the home and children are supported to attend routine health appointments. When appointments are missed, the staff encourage children to understand the importance of addressing their own health needs.

The staff ask children about their hobbies and interests and encourage them to choose activities that they enjoy. Children are encouraged to make use of the art room and they enjoy various arts and crafts. Children's artwork is proudly displayed around the home.

Children are engaging in meaningful direct work with staff, which is supporting children's development and the development of positive relationships. However, children are not yet being consulted on a regular basis about all aspects of their lives. This is a missed opportunity for staff to understand, and take action, in response to children's views, wishes and feelings.

Transitions for children into and out of the home have been well planned. Staff have developed a creative life-story book, which they use to chart children's progress and time at the home.

Managers and staff have reflected on previous shortfalls relating to admissions of children to the home. Processes have been significantly improved, which has resulted in a positive transition for one child.

When children move into the home, they receive a children's guide. This guide has recently been reviewed and is now more child-centred. However, the complaints procedure is not written in an accessible format for children. Furthermore, children have not received information about advocacy or how they can access this support.

The children live in a home that is maintained to a good standard. The recent improvements to the home's exterior and gardens provide children with a comfortable and welcoming environment.

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

Children have individualised risk-management plans that clearly identify risks and the actions that staff must take to reduce these risks. Staff are taking effective action, in line with these plans, which is promoting children's safety and welfare.

Staff support children's awareness of risks and help them to develop their understanding of how to keep safe. There have been risks for some children who have been missing from the home. However, the plans to minimise these risks and support children are robust. Staff are consistent in how they manage these risks and give appropriate advice and guidance to children.

There have not been any incidents of restraint in this home since the last inspection. Children are supported to develop effective coping strategies to manage their behaviour and feelings safely.

Positive behaviour is being promoted consistently by the staff team. There is a new rewards scheme, which children are invested in. Through praise and positive reinforcement, children's behaviour has improved.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced and suitably qualified. Managers and leaders have driven improvements in the quality of care provided to children by implementing additional staff meetings. These meetings provide the staff with opportunities for informal learning as well as time to reflect on their practice. Staff spoken to said that they value these meetings, and that they provide them with clearer guidance.

There is a consistent staff team, and the manager does not use agency staff. This means that children are always cared for by staff that know them well.

Staff are receiving supervision that is practice-related and regular. However, not all staff have received an annual appraisal.

Professional relationships are strong because the manager and staff work proactively with external agencies. These effective working relationships are ensuring good standards of care and promoting positive outcomes for the children that live in the home.

The manager has sent consultation forms to professionals to gather feedback on the home. Most of the responses are positive; however, one professional provided an opinion on an area for improvement. The manager has not yet addressed this, which means that they have not made the best use of information from independent sources.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who— develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff— regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care; help each child to understand how the child's privacy will be respected and the circumstances when it may have to be limited; help each child to prepare for any review of the child's relevant plans and to make the child's views, wishes and feelings known for the purposes of that review; and keep the children's guide and the home's complaints procedure under review and seek children's comments before revising either document; ensure that an explanation is given to each child as soon as reasonably practicable after the child's arrival about— what advocacy support or services are available to the child, how the child may access that support or those services and any entitlement the child may have to independent advocacy provision.	17 August 2022

(Regulation 7 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(iv)(c)(d)(iii))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	17 August 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8).
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the Children's Home Regulations, including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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, County Hall, Fishergate, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Gwyneth Monk

Registered manager: James Smith

Inspector

Emma Thornton, 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://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: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2022