

SC039676

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide short breaks for up to six young people who have learning and/or physical disabilities. The home is operated by a local authority.

There is a manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since March 2007.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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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 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: 29 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
08/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
28/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/12/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people receive highly individualised care, which is of an exceptional standard. Feedback from parents, carers and external professionals is consistently excellent. A parent commented, 'We had very high expectations after hearing some fantastic reviews and we were not disappointed. The care is phenomenal.'

Staff have a very good understanding of young people's needs. Care planning is highly effective, which helps to ensure that young people receive consistently safe care. Young people's care is constantly reviewed to ensure that their changing or emerging needs are met.

The manager works closely with parents, carers and external professionals to promote young people's health and well-being. For example, she has worked with some parents to assist them in managing complex medication regimes. One parent described how the manager had supported healthcare professionals in planning her son's epilepsy care.

Young people enjoy coming to the home and have happy experiences there. Great care is taken to tailor activities in line with young people's interests and preferences. Staff use innovative and creative ways to match young people's activities to their learning or sensory needs.

The manager and staff provide a good level of support to young people joining the home and those moving on to adult services. This well-planned, sensitive support helps young people and their families to manage these significant transitions.

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

Staff have a clear understanding of the risks to each young person's safety and well-being. Effective risk management helps to ensure that young people receive consistently safe and effective care. For example, the manager has adapted staffing levels in response to one young person's increasing health needs.

Parents, carers and external professionals express very high levels of confidence in the service. A parent commented, 'I never have to be concerned about [name of child] care. I am completely reassured that he is in very safe hands.'

Staff have good insight into young people's emotional responses and behaviours. They work well with young people to identify triggers to challenging behaviours and how young people can be best supported during times of distress.

The ability of staff to de-escalate challenging situations is demonstrated by the fact that there have been no incidents where staff have been required to physically intervene since the last inspection of the home.

The manager ensures that young people are provided with a safe environment. There are processes in place to promote young people's safety, including a daily fire

risk assessment, which is updated in accordance with the different group of young people staying at the home each day. This process could be further improved by including more information in young people's individualised emergency evacuation plans.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There is a manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since March 2007. The manager is a qualified social worker who provides highly effective leadership. This is demonstrated by the consistently outstanding outcomes and experiences of young people who use the service.

Without exception, the feedback from parents, carers and external professionals is extremely positive. A social worker said, 'Both management and staff are extremely knowledgeable and work hard to get to know the young people. They provide an excellent service.'

The manager works well with external agencies to ensure that young people's needs are met. In addition, she has created positive links with other services to learn and share good practice. This supports the ongoing development of the home.

The home provides a reliable and responsive service. The manager is able to demonstrate a number of examples where she has adapted the service to respond to young people's needs. Due to effective planning, there have been no occasions where young people's stays have needed to be cancelled for several years.

There is a stable team due to a low turnover of staff. This means that young people benefit from consistency and receive their care from people that they are familiar with. The manager constantly monitors staff training to ensure that it is in line with young people's needs and arranges specialist training where necessary.

Young people's accommodation is safe. However, the building is tired and outdated. Staff work hard to maintain a homely environment, but say that this is getting increasingly difficult due to the age of the property. Plans are in place to move to a new building, which is anticipated to be completed in approximately one year.

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

Recommendations

- Residential child care should provide a safe and stimulating environment in high-quality buildings, with spaces that support nurture and allow privacy as well as common spaces and spaces to be active. For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62 paragraph 14.4)
- Specifically relating to Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans; 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)

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: SC039676

Provision sub-type: Children's home

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

Responsible individual: Michael Nunn

Registered manager: Susan Sewell

Inspector

Marie Cordingley, Social Care Inspector

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