

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC039676
Inspector	Caroline Jones
Type of inspection	Full
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	Susan Sewell
Date of last inspection	15/10/2013

Inspection date	22/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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This is a good short break home where young people receive high quality care in a safe and nurturing environment. This supports them in developing new skills, abilities and talents, which build confidence and pride. Young people's families and partner agencies are consistently complimentary about the service. They comment: 'It is an excellent service, young people enjoy their stay, staff are all about the children.' Furthermore, their feedback is regularly sought to continually improve the service to young people.

Young people are the focus of care planning and improved care plans ensure they are cared for consistently according to their individual needs during their stay. Staff value each young persons uniqueness and have high aspirations for them in achieving their potential. Staff have warm and respectful relationships with young people and their parents confirm they feel safe, settled and happy during their stay.

The home is effectively run by a dedicated Registered Manager and two senior workers who together set the high standards of care. Monitoring processes are in place and provide oversight of care practice. Anti-discriminatory practice runs through all aspects of day-to-day care and young people are encouraged to participate in society irrespective of disability.

Three recommendations are raised as a result of this inspection. These relate to including young people's views in the internal monitoring reports, recording staff supervision and completing further training. These shortfalls have not negatively impacted upon the safety and welfare of young people to-date.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a short-break children's home operated by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to 10 young people with physical and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/10/2013	Interim	good progress
16/04/2013	Full	good
30/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
06/08/2012	Full	good

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of young people are taken into account in monitoring staff and in developing the home. In particular, ensure that monitoring reports produced under regulation 34 demonstrate consultation with young people regarding the quality of care (NMS 1.7)
- ensure that a written or electronic record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person. The record is signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision (NMS 19.5)
- ensure that staff have training in relation to young people's complex health needs. (NMS 6.7)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people continue to make good progress in particular in their social development, self care and independence skills. Excellent communication and partnership working with young people's families supports the progress young people make. Young people's families are actively encouraged to comment on the quality of the care and to make suggestions for improvement. Parent's comment: 'I am very happy, I know he is safe, I don't bat an eyelid knowing this, staff are brilliant, my child has a wonderful time and expresses this, there should be more like this.'

Staff are proactive in ensuring young people lead a healthy lifestyle irrespective of disability. Young people take part in numerous activities including: camping trips, holidays to Scotland, trips to parks and seaside resorts. They also enjoy activities in the home such as baking, soft play, games, music, dancing and arts. These opportunities help young people to develop their skills and abilities and builds confidence further.

There are good arrangements in place for promoting the health needs of young people. Staff work closely with parents who retain parental responsibility, and together they identify how best to meet the needs of young people. Furthermore, staff are trained in first aid and in how to administer young people's medication, which promotes safe working practices. Additionally, all staff have mandatory training that is regularly refreshed. However, training in relation to young people's complex needs, such as epilepsy, is not routinely refreshed to ensure staff have current knowledge of emerging practice in meeting young peoples needs.

Young people are supported to maintain their individual routine and attend school during their stay. Parents and carers remain in charge of young people's education. Excellent communication between staff, young people's families and school ensures the effective transfer of young people's information and the continuity of care. Young people are assisted to learn during their stay and staff complete homework with them to ensure their routine is maintained. Moreover, they receive praise, awards and certificates to celebrate their achievements.

Young people live with their families and attend the home for planned short breaks. Staff maintain excellent communication with young people's families through face to face meetings, information booklets, newsletters, coffee mornings and telephone conversations. These relationships are essential in promoting the outcomes of young people.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people flourish in a calm, nurturing and supportive environment. Staff have a thorough understanding of young people's individual needs and have consistently high aspirations for them. They find creative ways of involving young people in society, such as the 'Gateway Award.' This encourages young people with disabilities to gain new skills and experiences, become more independent, make friends and be active in the community. Challenging barriers to participation is a key strength of the staff.

Care planning is excellent and detailed short break plans provide a comprehensive picture of young people's individual needs and how these are met during their stay. Plans are regularly updated and staff consistently put these plans into practice, recognising young people's individual talents, interests and backgrounds. Consequently, young people receive a personalised stay that meets every aspect of their needs.

Staff are committed to young people, which is evident in the warm, positive relationships they have forged with them. They know each young person's mannerisms, likes and dislikes, which ensures their wishes and feelings are foremost. Attentive and respectful care of young people was observed throughout the inspection. Staff also advocate for young people and their rights and views are promoted during their stay through a keyworker system and young people's meetings. These practices help empower young people to have more control in their lives.

Young people participate in a range of new experiences, including peer social interactions, including national camping trips with other young people around the country. Also, they are encouraged to be healthy during their stay and take part in numerous activities to promote this. Moreover, all staff provide a varied and balanced diet in-line with young people's health needs and faith beliefs to ensure their choices are supported and respected.

Young people stay in a comfortable and welcoming environment. The home is clean, decorated and furnished to a good standard. The home is adapted to meet the needs of young people and they have ample space for private time alone. Staff ensure that young people stay in the same bedroom for comfort and familiarity and that it is personalised to reflect their particular tastes. This affords respect and dignity to young people.

Keeping children and young people safe **outstanding**

Young people's families have a strong sense of safety for their children staying at the home. They comment: 'I have no worries about safety at all, staff always contact me and let me know what is going on.' Additionally, young people have detailed risk assessments to manage and identify risks to them appropriately. Close supervision of young people ensures that their personal safety is maintained. There are no incidents

of young people missing from home or any risk taking behaviours. These care practices ensure that young people are effectively safeguarded and protected from harm.

Staff know young people exceptionally well and have developed strategies to manage their individual behaviours successfully. Regular consultation with parents offers complete transparency in the behaviour management process. There have been four physical interventions lasting a few seconds since the last inspection. These are robustly monitored and reviewed to ensure the safe care of young people.

Young people stay in a physically safe environment where they are protected by well managed health and safety procedures. Staff carry out routine health and safety checks around the home. Safety and insurance certificates are up-to-date and plans are made with young people to ensure they are aware of an emergency evacuation route in the event of a fire.

Organisational policies are in place to promote safer recruitment practice. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and reference checks are all undertaken before any appointment of staff is made. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate steps to verify visitors identity to ensure young people are protected.

Leadership and management

good

Young people live in a home that is effectively managed in their best interests. The Registered Manager and two senior workers make up the management team. They are well qualified and have a wealth of experience in working with young people with disabilities. The Registered Manager has been in position since March 2007 and knows the service extremely well. Together they provide leadership and accountability to ensure the smooth running of the home.

Young people's care is examined through quality assurance systems that include monthly management monitoring. However, young people's views are not routinely gained about the quality of care they receive to ensure their ideas count and to improve practice further. The manager is well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has addressed the three recommendations from the last inspection, such as improving care planning. A development plan is in place to drive further improvements. This continues to be influenced by the modernisation agenda of the local authority in which the future of the service is currently under review.

Young people are cared for by a child-focussed staff team who feel well supported through regular supervision and appraisals. However, staff supervision records do not consistently record details of the date that supervision occurred, the duration and signature of the supervisor and supervisee. Therefore, a clear overview of these arrangements is not available. Team meetings, daily handovers and training

opportunities support staff in their roles, which contributes to their competence in providing excellent care to young people.

A stable staff team over many years provides predictability and consistency for young people to settle during their stay. Staff are well qualified and have in-depth experience of working with young people with disabilities. Staff fully understand young people's individual needs and have high hopes for them in achieving their full potential. Staff recordings are generally very good and provide a picture of young people's experience during their stay. Young people's information is securely stored and shared confidentially to protect their safety and privacy.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.