

SC039689

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a local authority. It provides care for up to six children who may have social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in July 2019.

At the time of this inspection, six children were living in this home.

Inspection dates: 23 and 24 July 2024

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: 26 September 2023

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/09/2023	Full	Requires improvement to be good
25/10/2022	Full	Good
29/03/2022	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/09/2021	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff provide children with a good standard of consistent and nurturing care, which means that children's day-to-day experiences are positive. Children enjoy secure and trusting relationships with staff, which support a sense of security and stability. Children are settled and making progress from their individual starting points.

Staff support children to spend time with their families. Each child's views and wishes regarding the time they spend with their family are respected, and staff ensure that this time is safe and positive. This support has helped children to settle living in the home.

Children attend local schools, where they have excellent attendance. Staff ensure that children receive good-quality education which is tailored to their individual needs. Achievements, whether academic, social or personal, are celebrated by staff with the children with enthusiasm. This approach to educational achievements ensures that the children not only succeed academically but also develop confidence and resilience.

Children say they feel safe and happy. Staff genuinely care about children and relationships between staff and children are positive and nurturing. This creates a relaxed, family-like atmosphere in the home, testament to the manager and staff's dedicated efforts.

Children's identity, heritage and culture are well supported by staff. Children are accepted and supported by staff who take time to learn about and understand them. Staff ensure that children have additional specialist support from external agencies if required.

When children arrive at the home, their individual vulnerabilities and needs are not always fully considered. Therefore, on occasion, staff find it challenging to fully address the children's needs, which increases risks for both staff and children.

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

Since the last inspection, several high-risk incidents have affected the relationships between the children living in the home. This meant that some children felt unsafe. However, at the time of this inspection, children said that they felt safer and happier.

There are up-to-date risk assessments in place for children which support staff in practice. Staff follow strategies in risk assessments and work at reducing harm. Staff understand potential risks to children. They work closely with external agencies to ensure that professionals work together to keep children safe.

There has been a significant decrease in incidents of children going missing from home. This improvement highlights the effectiveness of safeguarding practice and the committed staff team in creating a safe environment for the children.

Staff understand the risks to children when they use the internet. There are clear protocols around internet use which are proportionate to the needs of each child. This helps ensure that children use the internet safely.

Children have not always had positive relationships with each other. However, this has recently improved. When there is conflict between children, staff manage this well. Managers have planned a summer holiday for the children to further support children's relationships with each other.

Staff use positive reinforcement and incentives to promote positive behaviour. This motivates children to achieve and increases their self-esteem.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an experienced manager who has built strong relationships with the children and staff. The manager has good oversight of staff practice and works with the staff team to ensure that they provide consistency for children. Staff spoke with high praise for the manager and say they feel valued by him.

The manager is providing good-quality care for the children about the children he cares for. He talks with enthusiasm, commitment and understanding. He has a clear vision for the home and is focused on providing children with good-quality care. The manager is reflective and recognises his strengths and areas for development. The manager and staff have worked hard to address previous identified shortfalls.

However, there are shortfalls in the manager ensuring that staff have the relevant experience and skills to manage relationships between children, particularly when children move into the home.

External professionals say that staff and the manager communicate well and that the children they work with are making positive progress. They say that staff offer unconditional care and build strong relationships, which is a particular strength.

Staff receive a good range of relevant training that provides them with the right skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the children in their care. New staff benefit from a thorough induction programme.

Managers demonstrate a commitment to regular staff supervision, contributing positively to staff support and professional development. However, not all staff receive supervision with the manager, and they do not have the opportunity to reflect on their practice. The current appraisal process does not provide staff with feedback from other staff in the home, external professionals and children.

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, The 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(a)(c)) In particular leaders and managers must ensure that all staff have the necessary skills and experience to manage the dynamics between children.	14 October 2024
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b)) In particular, the registered person must ensure that all staff, including bank staff, receive regular supervision.	14 October 2024

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure staff appraisals take into account the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and of children in the home's care. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: SC039689

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Registered provider address: County Hall, Preston PR1 8XJ

Responsible individual: Gwen Monk

Registered manager: Warren Howarth

Inspectors

Sally Mitchell, Social Care Inspector
Cathy Wilkins, Social Care Inspector

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