

SC061810

Registered provider: Cumbria County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate six young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by the local authority.

The current manager has been registered with Ofsted since 19 March 2018. She is experienced and appropriately qualified for this role. Prior to becoming the home's registered manager, she was a deputy manager at this home.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 March 2020

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: 9 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2018	Full	Good
02/05/2017	Full	Good
19/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/06/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There have been several changes to the composition of young people residing in the home since the last full inspection. Young people have moved on for a variety of reasons, including positive, planned moves and placement breakdowns. In general, young people make good progress at the home and thrive in the welcoming and caring environment. Specifically, progress can be seen in improved independence skills, positive engagement in work experience and uptake of activities offered.

Staff understand the individuality of young people. They help each young person to achieve their full potential, whatever that may look like for them. Equality and diversity are understood, and differences are celebrated. One young person has received support around gender identity. Another has been supported to understand diversity and develop increased tolerance.

Young people are supported to take part in a range of activities. Some had the opportunity to go on holidays to France and Spain. Others have taken part in go-karting, rugby, horse riding and bowling. Young people feel that their wishes and feelings in respect of activities are considered.

Young people's voices are heard and recorded in a variety of ways. They have access to the North West Advocacy Service and they know how to make complaints. When they do complain, appropriate action is taken in response and they are informed of the complaint outcome.

Education, health and well-being are promoted. Some staff have taken on champion roles (for example, for education). The home has access to an emotional well-being officer to support the young people. This person also helps staff to develop a better understanding of the impact of young people's adverse childhood experiences.

Positive relationships are nurtured between young people and staff. Young people reported that they felt well cared for and liked the staff who look after them.

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

Most identified risks for young people reduce over the course of their placement. Where risks escalate, or do not reduce, this is understood and acted on. Some placements have ended due to escalating risks. This can be considered positive practice because the home understands when it is not meeting the young person's need to be safe. Other increasing risks are addressed through direct work or referral to other agencies. For example, one young person has been referred to forensic Child and Adolescent Mental Health services (CAMHS) for an assessment.

The number of sanctions and negative consequences used has reduced. It was acknowledged by the manager that the use of 'grounding' young people as a generic consequence to unwanted behaviour was ineffective. Staff now adopt a more

strength-based approach to behaviour management. Any consequences are a natural result of behaviour, for example restoration and rebuilding of relationships. Staff help young people to reflect on their behaviour and understand the impact it can have on other people.

Staff are skilled in the use of therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI). This method focuses on de-escalating behaviours and helping young people co-regulate. This is effective and there have been no incidents of restrictive physical intervention since the last full inspection.

Bullying has been an issue due to one young person's issues around gender identity. Staff are clear that bullying of any sort will not be tolerated. Work has been done with the young people about acceptance of diversity.

Risk assessments identify young people's risks. Staff spoken to were aware of risk management strategies for each young person. However, risk assessments are not always clearly updated following increasing risk-taking behaviours, and the level of risk recorded is therefore not always accurate. A requirement is made for the staff to address this and ensure that all risk assessments are accurate and contemporary.

There has been one medication error. No ill-effects resulted from this error. Action was taken once this was identified and the issue was addressed at a subsequent team meeting.

The number of incidents of young people going missing from home saw a spike which has subsequently significantly reduced. The reduced level has now been maintained for some time. This shows that young people make progress in this area. There are systems in place which are implemented when any young person goes missing.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by a competent and experienced manager who has worked in the home for a considerable time. She understands the home well, including the strengths of the staff team and the progress young people are making.

The manager provides a supportive environment for staff. Staff get regular supervision and feel that they can approach the manager as and when needed. The manager works some care shifts when staffing ratios render this necessary, and thus provides a positive role model for both young people and staff. Staff have access to regular training and have taken on champion roles to specialise in particular areas.

The home has developed good working relationships with partner agencies. This results in positive joined-up working and planning to meet young people's needs. Partner agencies spoken to as part of this inspection praised the home. They provided the inspector with positive feedback about the impact of the care provided.

One area noted for improvement, and made as a requirement, is in ensuring that all detail relevant to children's admissions and discharges is appropriately recorded.

The manager has used reflective practice to learn lessons from previous admissions. Some young people have not been appropriately matched to the young people already in placement. This has caused unsettled behaviour, increased risks and placement breakdown. More thorough consideration of available information about young people prior to admission has resulted in more successful matching.

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i)) Specifically, this refers to ensuring that all young people's risk assessments are comprehensive and take account of changes in young people's risks.	30/04/2020
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, the registered person must ensure that— medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and to no other child. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)(b))	30/04/2020
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)b)) Specifically, ensure that all detail relevant to children's admissions and discharges is appropriately recorded.	30/04/2020

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: SC061810

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Cumbria County Council, Cumbria House, 117
Botchergate, Carlisle, Cumbria CA1 1RD

Responsible individual: Lynn Berryman

Registered manager: Cheryl Athersmith

Inspector

Gillian Walters, Social Care Inspector

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