

SC061810

Registered provider: Cumbria County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by Cumbria County Council to provide care for up to six children.

The manager registered with Ofsted in March 2018.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection date: 6 April 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: 9 November 2021

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

Following a full inspection on 9 and 10 November 2021, the home was served with a restriction notice and four compliance notices in respect of regulation 10, 11, 12, and 13. A monitoring visit was completed on 15 December 2021. Necessary action had been taken to meet all four notices. A further visit was completed on 1 February 2022 to monitor the restriction notice. The inspector found the home to have

complied with the restriction and found sufficient improvements to allow this notice to expire.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/11/2021	Full	Inadequate
05/03/2020	Full	Good
09/05/2018	Full	Good
02/05/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are benefitting from a series of improvements made in the home since the last inspection. The home is currently settled and provides children with a consistent and calm environment in which to live. Incidents have reduced, and children are making progress.

Children are making progress in respect of their health. Their health needs are clearly identified and responded to. They receive necessary medical attention and treatment where required. One child has undergone an operation and others are attending routine appointments. Improved routines in the home also mean that children have better sleep habits. As a result, children's overall physical and emotional health are good.

Children's educational attendance is varied. Two children have good attendance levels and others are difficult to engage. Staff regularly complete consultation with children around this, listening to their views, wishes and preferences to encourage and support engagement. Better routines and support in the home have also helped some children to increase their attendance and engagement, and one child has received certificates for her recent progress.

Care planning in the home has received attention and children's plans have been reviewed. This has afforded children increased opportunities for family time and overnight stays with those who are important to them. This is supporting children's independence skills and helps them to work towards their future goals. This means that children are having positive experiences in line with their plans and are happier because of this.

Children have had positive experiences of moving in to and out of the home because of careful and considered planning. Detailed impact assessments have been completed to ensure children's needs can be met. Relationships and potential issues between those living in the home have also been considered. As a result, children get along and there are no instances of bullying in the home.

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

Incidents inside the home have significantly reduced because negative behaviours displayed by children are appropriately and effectively managed by staff. Staff feel empowered by the improved guidance given to them by managers and are providing children with consistent boundaries. These clear boundaries and rules provide children with a safe and predictable home environment.

Staff have improved their responses to incidents of children going missing from home. Where children attempt to go missing, staff actively follow them and look for them. This shows children that staff care about their safety and want them to return

home. Because of this, incidents have reduced in severity and children are receiving good help and protection.

One child has made a complaint in respect of how staff managed an incident in the home. The manager took quick and effective action to review and investigate the complaint. Unfortunately, although retracted by the child, this complaint reflected an allegation of physical abuse but was not highlighted to the relevant professionals in line with policies and procedures. This has the potential to hinder children's safety and well-being and a requirement was made to address this.

Risk assessments are improved. They accurately reflect the risks posed to children and the behaviours displayed. Staff have received all the necessary training to equip them with the skills to recognise and respond to children's risk-taking behaviours.

The manager has taken action to respond to medication errors that have occurred in the home. Staff have revisited training and medication guidance has been reissued and discussed with staff. At the time of the inspection, children were self-administering over-the-counter products. It was unclear whether these were approved homely remedies. Furthermore, the inspector could not see that the child had been given advice and guidance about the product, directions for use and potential side effects. Shortfalls in prescribed medication administration and a lack of clarity around homely remedies have the potential to cause harm to children.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Internal monitoring has improved since the last full inspection. Incidents are reviewed thoroughly, and the manager has increased oversight in the home. As a result, the manager has increased awareness of the needs of children in the home and the actions to be taken to meet these.

Children are receiving good continuity of care. Staffing levels have increased since the last inspection and there is now management oversight on each shift. This ensures that children receive consistent care that is directed by senior team members. This also helps staff with decision-making and serves to strengthen the care and support provided to children daily.

Morale is good and staff say they are happy working in the home. They receive additional support and guidance through detailed bimonthly team meetings. This regular consultation and discussion helps staff to maintain good practice and fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

The manager and staff have demonstrated excellent partnership working. Increased communication and information-sharing has meant that several external professionals have attended the home to review children's needs and help staff to respond. This support has been utilised effectively, meaning that children's care is holistic and that there are positive outcomes for children living in this home.

Effective action has been taken to meet the requirements made at the previous inspection. The manager continues to work towards action plans in place to secure improvement. This demonstrates staff and managers' dedication to improving children's experiences and the quality of care provided.

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 registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1)) Specifically, ensure the policies and procedures for homely medication are known and followed. Reduce the likelihood of potential harm by increasing staff's awareness of medication side effects, contraindicators and formal administration guidelines.	22 May 2022
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	22 May 2022

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are encouraged to share any concerns about their care or other matters as soon as they arise. In particular, inform children of the outcomes of any investigation arising from complaints and/or concerns raised by children and provide them with the opportunity to discuss and comment on these. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)

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 CA1 1RD

Responsible individual: Lynn Berryman

Registered manager: Cheryl Athersmith

Inspector

Natalie Bennett, Social Care Inspector

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