

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	19/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC061810
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Cumbria County Council
Registered provider address	The Lonsdale Building, The Courts, Carlisle CA3 8NA
Responsible individual	Walter McCulloch
Registered manager	Colin Wall
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	19/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The home continues to provide a good level of support to the young people who reside there. The staff team has remained relatively stable, with any new additions enhancing the gender and skills balance. The management team has continued to develop, and their complementary skills help to ensure the smooth and efficient running of the home. Staff at the home are well qualified, with most having attained the level 3 national vocational qualification and several (including the registered manager) having completed the level 5 manager's award. Some areas of the home are currently being redecorated, and young people have assisted in choosing paint and furnishings. Areas that are in need of repainting have been identified, and there are plans in place to address this. One bathroom requires some work, and this is being undertaken by the contractor who did substandard work when it was originally decorated. The dining area would benefit from increased personalisation, and consideration is being given as to how this can be achieved. Young people have positive attendance at education and employment, and their behaviour in the home is generally settled. Those who are being prepared to move on are developing independence skills. Young people spoken to were mainly positive about the home and the support that they were offered. Emotional resilience workers have been employed by the county, and the home is making good use of them for advice and guidance in delivering care to the young people. One area of notable success is their gathering of information about a young person prior to their admission, which helps to inform staff about the best ways to support them once in placement. Some young people have moved on from the placement in planned and constructive ways. Another young person moved on due to the placement not meeting his needs, and his outcome has not been positive. The home had identified at the last inspection that the placement was not appropriate for this young person, but continued to support him until an alternative was identified. This showed commitment and tenacity with some very challenging and high-risk	

behaviours. The staff recognise that young people receive a significantly lower level of support once they move on from the placement at post-18, and continue to make occasional visits and keep in touch with young people whenever possible. Young people moving into the placement have been well matched, and there has been a noted improvement in the recording of matching considerations. The home gathers information from external agencies prior to placement to ensure that it has as much knowledge as possible about the young person.

Child sexual exploitation is an area of high risk for several of the young people placed. The home works well with partner agencies to address the risks, and safety plans are in place for some young people, which the home has contributed to. Additionally, the home has worked in partnership to complete a mapping exercise which helps to inform them about local child sexual exploitation risks. Staff are constantly mindful of risks to young people and assist them to understand their risk-taking behaviours through one-to-one sessions and by supporting them to access external agencies such as the NSPCC, the child and adolescent mental health service and SAFA (Self-Harm Awareness For All).

For other young people, self-harm is their area of high risk. The home is vigilant in offering support, aware of the times when risks may be heightened and proactive in putting strategies in place for alternative methods of emotional release. For example, one young person uses the manager's email to share concerns directly as they arise, which appears to be reducing their incidence of self-harm.

Missing from home levels have reduced since the last full inspection, which is largely down to one young person moving to an alternative placement. This young person was persistently missing from this home. When young people do go missing, the staff try actively to locate them and work with police to secure their safe return. Independent return interviews are almost always offered, and the home is aware of the frequency of missing episodes and whether the trigger for a strategy meeting is reached.

The quality of record keeping in the home has improved. All records checked had been signed and dated by their author. Paperwork relating to young people has been streamlined, and there is a focus on the quality of recording rather than the quantity. Young people's daily diaries, in particular, have been developed into more accessible, readable and meaningful documents for young people. Direct work relating to specific incidents is clearly recorded and evidences that staff actively address issues of risk-taking behaviour with young people. The quality of notifications to the regulator could be improved to ensure that they capture the good work that the staff do to support young people following serious incidents and in addressing their risk-taking behaviours.

The manager has good monitoring systems in place, and the quality of the regulation 45 reports has improved since the last full inspection. The manager has identified some issues in respect of the usefulness of external monitoring, mainly due to the timing of the visits. However, the process has identified areas for

development which are being addressed.

The home's statement of purpose has been updated in line with a requirement made at the last inspection. Unfortunately, the updated version has not been sent to the regulator and the requirement is therefore repeated at this inspection.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate six young people, who may have an emotional and/or behavioural difficulty.

The home is managed by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/06/2016	Full	Good
23/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/10/2015	Full	Good
09/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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: (a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and (b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3))	28/02/2017

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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