

SC398253

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, or learning disabilities. The home is part of a private organisation. The home provides care for single-sex occupancy only.

The home's manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2011.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 May 2018

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: 10 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2017	Full	Good

08/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
06/09/2016	Full	Good
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b)(c))	15/06/2018

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff try very hard to build caring and trusting relationships with young people. This results in young people believing that staff care, and want the best for them. The home has a nurturing ethos which is implemented by staff and managers who work hard to meet the needs of young people. Staff continue to be empathetic, caring and nurturing

when young people significantly challenge them.

Young people are supported to attend and engage in education. When there are issues around a young person's education, such as exclusion, the home works closely with the school and the young person to continue to promote their learning and participation. Staff support young people to prepare for exams by encouraging revision.

Participation in community activities is promoted. One young person attends cadets. Some young people prefer to spend time in the community with their friends; this managed safely and promotes young people's independence.

Staff show particular skill in listening to young people and helping them to express their views and feelings. This is apparent in the increase in family contact for some young people, in line with their wishes. Staff recognise the importance of family connections and continue to promote regular family contact, even when young people are in crisis and their behaviour is very difficult to manage. Young people also benefit from detailed key-work sessions, which often occur over a number of days and consist of numerous short discussions about issues that are important to them. Staff could gather young people's views by holding regular young people's meetings where they can express their views in a group environment.

Detailed and up-to-date placement planning ensures that young people's plan are clear. Close links with external agencies ensure a multi-agency approach to focus on young people's holistic needs. The company employs a nurse who has oversight of young people's health needs. This attention to young people's health has resulted in an assessment of a young person's health needs which had not previously been possible. This enabled his placing authority to identify a more specialised placement which could meet the young people's individual needs.

Planning for admission into the home is carefully considered. One young person had an extremely detailed transition plan which enabled him to move easily from his previous home into this home. The sole young person currently in placement has an impending planned move out of the home to return to his placing authority area. Staff are making every effort to ensure that he is prepared for this by advocating for increased family contact in the home area and helping him to apply for a place at a local college.

Some key staff have left the home during this inspection period. While the home has maintained its very high staffing levels, this has resulted in the existing staff taking on additional shifts. Staff reported it had been an exhausting period for them, both in respect of their working hours and in respect of the issues and challenges shown by the young people during a very unsettled period.

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

This inspection period has been a turbulent one for the home. Young people have engaged in risk-taking behaviours that are increasingly extreme and have, on occasion,

been highly aggressive towards staff. Staff have experienced numerous assaults or attempts to assault them, and have managed these well. Staff rarely contact the police for assistance with managing behaviour, which has prevented young people from becoming unnecessarily criminalised.

Risk assessments are of a good quality and are regularly updated as young people's risks increase or change. Staff are alerted to changes to young people's assessments by email, and the manager uses a system of read receipts to ensure that all staff have read the additional information.

Young people have exerted a negative influence on each other in the home, and have encouraged each other to engage in disruptive and non-complaint behaviours in the home, and to go missing from care. Staff are aware of the dynamic in the home and the effect it has on each young person. The home has reduced the number of young people accommodated down to one, in order to ensure that there is no further impact on young people's safety and well-being as a result of peer influence. A requirement is made at this inspection relating to young people having positive relationships with each other and with staff. This is due to the above, and also to the high number of incidents where staff have been assaulted.

Missing-from-home incidents are well managed. Staff contact the police appropriately and follow the young person's individual missing from home plan. Independent return interviews are always requested, and have taken place for most incidents.

The use of restrictive physical intervention has risen sharply for some young people. This is due to staff needing to protect the young person or themselves from harm. Incidents are recorded in detail and young people have the opportunity to comment on the interventions. Some incidents have been serious, and have required a number of staff to manage the holds. Following such incidents, young people's placements have been reviewed. For one young person, this has resulted in his placement being terminated due to staff not feeling that they were able to meet his high level of need in situations where holds were necessary. An area identified for further development is the analysis of physical interventions to identify any triggers, patterns or trends that may result in changes to young people's behaviour management plans.

Young people are educated about risk and how to keep themselves safe. They are aware of rules and boundaries and report that these are fair in the main. Staff are good at maintaining young people's routines, and are capable of implementing the agreed boundaries. Young people are rewarded for positive behaviour.

Staff are trained to deliver care safely to young people through courses such as the safe handling of medication, child sexual exploitation, safeguarding, first aid and Team-Teach.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is experienced and qualified, and continues to be passionate about providing a caring, nurturing and safe environment to enable the young people to make progress.

The previously stable staff team has had a number of changes. This has resulted in less-experienced staff members being recruited. The management of the home has remained the same, and therefore has provided stability and continuity for young people. New staff report that the induction process prepares them well for their role, and that they feel fully supported by manager and the more experienced staff.

The home is entering a period of change. The managers have a plan to reduce the number of young people that the home accommodates to four, so the age range for admission has been lowered. This is due to the belief that the managers and staff can effect greater change with younger people who may potentially be in the home's care for a long period that lasts until they are independent. The updated statement of purpose reflects the changes made. There is a detailed development plan in place which reflects plans for caring for a younger cohort of children. This includes a putting up a tyre swing and football nets in the home's large garden.

The manager is mindful of the need to ensure that full information is available before decisions are made about admissions to the home. He takes time to consider the matching of young people and consults with the staff team, as well as seeking additional information from the young people's placing authorities.

There are systems in place for gathering feedback from young people, stakeholders and parents in order to inform the manager's monitoring of the home. Feedback gathered for this inspection from social workers, police and parents was highly positive, even where placements had been ended in an unplanned way.

Staff benefit from an extensive range of training and are specifically trained by the company's therapeutic lead in the PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity, empathy) therapeutic model of care. Managers are keen to embed this practice into everyday care.

The manager has focused on improving records, which has resulted in improvements in recording since the previous inspection. Records are detailed and clearly cross-refer to other documents.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC398253

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Rayrigg Showrooms, Rayrigg Road, Windermere LA23 3DN

Responsible individual: Paul Jenkinson

Registered manager: Michael Dodd

Inspector

Charlie Bamber: social care inspector

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