

Inspection report for children's home

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC398253        |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Gillian Walters |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Registered person</b>         | North Lakes Children's Services Limited                     |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | Kirby Moor School Longtown Road Brampton<br>Cumbria CA8 2AB |
| <b>Responsible individual</b>    | Anthony Middleton                                           |
| <b>Registered manager</b>        | Michael Dodd                                                |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b>   | 24/02/2014                                                  |

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b> | 25/09/2014 |
|------------------------|------------|

|                                          |               |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Previous inspection                      | good progress |
| Enforcement action since last inspection | none          |

|                                        |                    |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>This inspection</b>                 |                    |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>           | <b>outstanding</b> |
| Outcomes for children and young people | outstanding        |
| Quality of care                        | outstanding        |
| Keeping children and young people safe | outstanding        |
| Leadership and management              | good               |

## Overall effectiveness

|                   |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|
| Judgement outcome | <b>outstanding</b> |
|-------------------|--------------------|

The children's home demonstrates an exceptional commitment to making a positive difference to young people's lives. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable staff team enable young people to become settled and make exceptional progress particularly in the areas of emotional resilience, personal safety and education.

Young people's safety is extremely well managed. Clear and effective systems work together with joint agency collaboration and regular consultation with young people. As a result, the home proves effective in reducing risk taking behaviours.

Young people are consistently consulted on all aspects of the running of the home. For example, consultation documents, young people's meetings and individual keywork sessions provide young people with excellent opportunities to raise their views. Likewise, because young people have developed exceptional relationships with staff, informal consultation takes place as part and parcel of day-to-day life living in the home.

Young people are looked after in accordance to their well developed, individual and personalised placement plan. Staff provide exceptionally well planned care that takes into account the individual needs and wishes of all young people. Social workers and other professionals involved with the home say 'The staff go the extra mile. They

make such a difference to young people and it is clear they want the very best for them.'

Young people are cared for by a committed, knowledgeable and consistent staff team. Suitable staff ratios ensure that young people are afforded the care and attention they need in order to build essential self-confidence and self-esteem. One young person said 'It is great here, it isn't like anywhere I have lived before.'

Leadership and management of the home is strong. The experienced Registered Manager places a clear emphasis on providing a high standard of personalised care for young people. Managers have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home because of effective monitoring. Likewise, external monitoring provides the home with a platform for continuous development. The home has a track record of identifying and addressing shortfalls in order to maintain the high standards of care evident in this home.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private provider, who has a small number of other children's homes in the locality. It provides a service to five young males, between the ages of 12 and 17 years. The home cares for young people with learning disabilities as well as those who experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. The organisation also operates a school, registered with the Department for Education, providing fully integrated programmes of care and education.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement  |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 24/02/2014      | Interim         | good progress         |
| 10/07/2013      | Full            | good                  |
| 25/02/2013      | Interim         | satisfactory progress |
| 21/09/2012      | Full            | good                  |

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

### 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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

| Reg.         | Requirement                                                                              | Due date   |
|--------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 27<br>(2001) | ensure staff employed at the home receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27 (4)(a)) | 19/12/2014 |

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make excellent progress in a home that is a safe, homely and caring environment dedicated to securing positive outcomes for them. Placement planning is highly effective with young people taking a lead in shaping and developing their plan. Each plan is child friendly, completely individual and focuses on the individual personalities of young people. Consequently, young people engage well because this form of planning enables them to feel in control of their lives and assists them to make informed and sensible choices about their future. One young person said, 'Sometimes I try and sort things out for myself, but I know that if I can't the staff are always there to help me.'

Relationships between staff and young people are firmly established and based on mutual respect and regard. Young people trust staff and this helps them to take steps forward in making significant changes in their lives. For example, young people who previously struggled to engage with external services now engage very well and say, 'I get the right help here. I like it here.'

Young people benefit from a range of bespoke educational resources that assists them either to reintegrate back into education or to maintain an already established placement. From their initial starting point young people develop immense self-esteem and confidence in order to re-embark on their educational journey, make friends in the community and undertake part-time or voluntary work in their spare time. A parent said, my child is so settled and has really matured since living in the home. We are very happy with all the progress he is making.'

Young people are far healthier as a direct result of living in the home. They are registered with local health care professionals and are provided with suitable support in order to attend appointments. Likewise, young people are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and engage extremely well in both in-house group discussions and input from external services. Consequently, behaviours such as smoking and drinking alcohol have significantly reduced.

Young people are provided with a range of internal and external activities to support healthy and active lifestyles. Activities include horse riding, fishing, camping, karate and guitar lessons. Likewise, young people make friends at school and in the community enabling them to develop their own style and sense of self. Young people say, 'I have made lots of friends at college and locally and I see them most days.'

Young people are supported to maintain relationships with family and friends in accordance with the local authority care plan. A social worker said, 'I am so happy with the placement. My child is very happy and is achieving so much. I know this is the right place for her. Staff include families where possible and this keeps the

relationship strong.' Likewise a parent said, 'My child is doing brilliantly , he really is, he is a lot more settled in himself, he is growing up.' 'I am happy with the care he gets at the home.' As a result, young people are supported to maintain a strong sense of identity and belonging.

Young people working towards a plan of independent living are provided with excellent support in order to develop the skills essential to moving on. As a result, young people are driven to succeed and strive to further enhance their skills. For example, young people take turns to plan and cook the evening meal while others undertake additional training courses such as, safeguarding, first aid and fire awareness. Consequently, young people are provided with valuable opportunities to develop and enhance independent skills at an achievable level.

#### **Quality of care**

#### **outstanding**

Young people thrive in an environment dedicated to generating positive outcomes for them. Well established and qualified staff work extremely hard to build trusting relationships in order to enable young people to work through some of their past difficulties and take positive steps forward. This has proved successful with all young people making remarkable progress in the home.

Young people's views and opinions are encouraged, promoted and respected in the home. Observation of general discussions, banter, joking around and the offer of guidance and compassion highlights the exceptional relationships formed in this home. The practice in the home enables young people to feel safe in order to discuss matters openly with staff or as a group.

Young people are confident that should they be unhappy they are able to share this with staff. Comparatively, young people have regular contact with independent advocates, children's rights advisors and the local community police who work closely and in partnership with the home. Staff say, 'We have developed very good links with lots of different agencies and we work together to help our young people.'

Young people's placement plans are exceptional. Each plan perfectly captures young people's individual personality, identity and future goals and aspirations. Young people own their plan and regularly update, review and comment on the progress they make. Likewise, young people undertake regular one-to-one sessions with their keyworker to address how their plan is moving forward. A parent said, I am so happy they are living in the home, it has made such a difference to their lives.'

Comparatively, young people benefit from placement planning that clearly identifies individual heritage, identity, sexuality and faith. Young people are encouraged to pursue their individual beliefs and are offered a range of material to further develop their understanding of individual choice and difference.

Young people's health is consistently promoted because of effective partnerships with health agencies. For example, regular consultation with named health professionals ensure young people have a good understanding of how to manage aspects of their own health including a better understanding of issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexual relationships. Because of this, young people are able to make informed decisions and choices in their lives.

From their initial starting point, young people with a history of educational disruption and non-attendance make exceptional progress in the home. This is because the staff team are extremely strong advocates for young people and seek out bespoke educational opportunities in order to maximise educational experience and achievement. As a result, young people are extremely well supported and successfully integrate into schools and colleges within the local area.

Young people live in a home that blends within the residential community. Young people are settled in the home and say that it feels like home. Photographs, pictures and awards are proudly displayed around the home and are an example of some of the ways young people develop ownership of their home.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    outstanding**

Young people are safe and feel safe in the home. Staff plan for young people's safety at the point of referral. This means that all appropriate safeguarding agencies are involved in the planning for risk and safety management as soon as the young person begins living in the home.

Risk assessments are developed in partnership with multi-agency professionals. Young people are fully involved in the risk management process and build excellent relationships with external safeguarding agencies. It is clear that young people with a previous history of being missing or absent make significant improvements that result in a substantial reduction in this and other forms of risk taking behaviours.

Staff present as excellent role models particularly in problem solving techniques. They make good use of escalation approaches to deal with the very rare occurrences of challenging behaviour. As a result, physical intervention is extremely rare in the home.

Young people are encouraged to demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour and become good citizens within the community. This has proved successful. Young people build good relationships with neighbours and develop respect for those living in the community. Likewise, behaviour management plans are in place and focus on discussions with staff and planned restorative justice. Consequently, young people learn valuable lessons with regard to putting things right and accepting personal responsibility for their actions.

The home employs a robust recruitment and selection procedure that ensures young people are looked after by staff that are appropriately checked in order to work in the home. Visitors are appropriately vetted and this helps to make sure that young people remain protected while in their home.

## **Leadership and management**

**good**

The Registered Manager has been in post since July 2011. He brings to the role a number of years experience within children's residential care. He is qualified at level 4 in social care management and leads a strong and skilled team in the delivery of exceptional child care practice.

Young people live in a home that is managed in their best interests. The home meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose, and young people, social workers and families are clear about the service and support the home provides.

Internal and external monitoring systems provide the home with a consistent approach to the overall monitoring of care. Detailed information highlights areas for development and the manager's action plan details the methods used to enhance the service. Likewise, an excellent annual training package ensures staff receive up-to-date quality training essential to maintaining the excellent child care practice evident in the home.

Although staff receive a good level of support from the manager, records of supervision are not always kept up to date. Therefore, individual training needs or personal development targets are not on hand to assist in the continuous development of staff.

The manager makes good use of reflective practice, the views of external services and families are taken into account to ensure young people's needs are appropriately met. The home shows the capacity to improve based on the progress the young people have made to date.

The manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering excellent child centred practice tailored to the individual and personal needs of young people. The effectiveness of this approach is measurable in the outstanding progress young people make, particularly in education and social integration.

The manager is aware of the procedure for notifying Ofsted of incidents under Regulation 30, Schedule five and has been consistent in the reporting of all incidents occurring in the home. This practice ensures that information is shared with the regulatory agency in order that the actions and outcomes for young people can be suitable assessed.

## What inspection judgements mean

| Judgement   | Description                                                                       |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outstanding | A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Good        | A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.                      |
| Adequate    | A service that only meets minimum requirements.                                   |
| Inadequate  | A service that does not meet minimum requirements.                                |

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.