

SC398253

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Service Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a private organisation. The home provides care for up to five boys who experience social and/or emotional difficulties and learning disabilities.

The home was registered with Ofsted in August 2009 and the manager registered in May 2019.

Four children were living at the home at the time of the inspection.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this site.

Inspection dates: 29 and 30 April 2025

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: 17 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/12/2024	Full	Good
14/03/2024	Full	Good
07/02/2023	Full	Good
12/05/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children's moves into the home are positive and well planned. One child has built relationships with the other children and staff in a short time. The child's social worker is of the view that the positive communication between the team and the child's family has had a positive impact on their move into the home.

Another child moved out of the home in line with their wishes. The team produced lengthy transition documents, including a comprehensive health plan. These provided a detailed outline of the child's background to support the understanding of their new care team.

Most children have lived in the home for a long time. To prepare for one child's move to semi-independence, the team is maintaining relationships with their family to ensure that they will have a support network around them.

Children's physical and emotional health needs are well met. There is significant input from the company therapist and nurse, who know the children well. The staff benefit from regular input from both professionals through team meetings, training and reflection.

Staff provide sensitive care and support for two children with complex health needs. This means that children can share details of their health needs without feeling judged or embarrassed. There are effective measures in place to support both children's experiences. Staff are knowledgeable about another child's health anxieties and how to manage these.

All children are making progress at school. There is effective communication between care staff and school staff to ensure that there is a consistent approach for children. This helps to break down barriers to learning for children.

Staff support children to keep active and to get a good balance between indoor and outdoor activities. Staff are mindful of how some children can become fixated on their interests. Staff work hard to ensure that children are supported to engage in activities in a positive way that benefits their physical and emotional health.

Children are supported to spend time with people who are important to them. Staff support children's family time to ensure that it is safe and encourages positive relationships.

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

Risk assessments are robust, detailed and regularly updated. They reflect the current concerns for children and provide effective strategies for staff to follow. Children are supported by staff to understand and reflect on their behaviours.

There have been challenges for children over recent months, which have impacted on their behaviours. Staff use their understanding of the children to provide nurturing care that helps children to work through their emotions.

There are consistent routines in place, which provide predictability for children. Staff are consistent in how they support children with the rules and boundaries in place. This helps children to feel safe and supported.

Children rarely go missing from the home. If children do go missing, staff follow the protocols in place to support children to return home safely.

Physical restraint is rarely used and only as a last resort. There are detailed records of incidents and debriefs with staff and children, which support learning and reflection.

Staff complete referrals for specialist support to help keep children safe. Staff complete training to meet children's individual needs, for example, in respect of radicalisation. However, the manager recognises that the input of a specialist in this area would enhance staff understanding.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager knows the children well and advocates on their behalf. She has well-established relationships with the children and is present in the home as part of their daily routines. This helps her to observe staff practice and consider how the team can better support children.

The manager has established effective working relationships with other professionals, which improve outcomes for children. Social workers and family members praise the management of the home and the family atmosphere it provides for children.

There is a stable staff team in place, and staff feel well supported by the manager. The team demonstrates their resilience in response to the challenges they have faced in recent months. The staff work well together, and they are supported by managers and other professionals.

Allegations and complaints are taken seriously. The manager and head of care ensure that these are thoroughly investigated and dealt with appropriately and in a timely way. These provide opportunities for staff learning and reflection.

Staff training is up to date. Staff benefit from the specialist knowledge of the company nurse and therapist as well as external professionals. Staff have developed specific knowledge to support children's health needs, which has led to positive outcomes for children.

Staff receive regular supervision, which supports them to reflect on their practice. Annual appraisals include feedback from children on their views of the staff who care for them. They do not include feedback from professionals who work with staff.

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that annual appraisals of staff take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

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: SC398253

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Service Limited

Registered provider address: Malvern View, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4AD

Responsible individual: Stacy Cooper

Registered manager: Jeanette Wilson

Inspector

Andrea Foreman, Social Care Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

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