

SC416599

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 owned and managed by a private provider. The home provides care for up to five children who may experience social and emotional difficulties.

The home registered with Ofsted in August 2010, and the manager registered in November 2023.

At the time of this inspection, two children were living in the home.

Inspection dates: 7 and 8 August 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: 11 December 2024

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2024	Full	Good
22/02/2024	Full	Good
07/10/2022	Full	Good
07/06/2021	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children say that they are happy living in this home and are supported by a nurturing, consistent team of staff. Positive, trusting relationships are being developed that enable children to make progress in all areas of their lives.

Transitions are well managed. Two children who had lived at the home for several years have recently moved on in line with their plans, and two new children have moved into the home. One child who has moved on from the home said, 'It is great here. They [staff] will love and care for you and help you whenever they can, but they will be straight with you.' The registered manager prepares children as much as possible, considering their individual need to move on. Care is also taken when considering the needs of children when they move into the home.

Education is seen as important, and the provider has their own educational provision nearby. One of the children has increased his attendance to 95% and is enjoying being in education.

There are a large number of activities on offer to the children who love getting out and about. The children are encouraged to join groups and clubs in the local area to help increase their self-esteem and confidence with other children.

Key-work sessions are planned and are in response to both long-term plans and incidents that occur. The full month is collated into one document to give a good oversight of the work undertaken with the children and demonstrates the progress they make.

Children benefit from having access to the provider's own nurse and therapy team. This gives them the opportunity to receive help promptly and enables them to begin to take responsibility for their own well-being.

Time spent with family and those important to them is complex for the children due to their recent move into the home. The staff and manager advocate strongly on behalf of children to ensure that the rebuilding of relationships is at a pace that each child is comfortable with.

Care plans and daily records are individualised and detailed. However, some records contain inaccuracies, and some language used is often jargonistic or generalised and will not support children to fully understand their journey.

Children's records do not always contain the most up-to-date statutory documents. While this has been raised by the registered manager, she has not escalated the matter to senior staff in the local authority when she has received no response.

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

Despite being new to the home, the children say that they are comfortable living here and feel safe. They can identify staff they would go to if they felt they needed support, and both are aware of how to make a complaint if they need to. This helps children feel a sense of belonging from early on in the placement.

Risk assessments are reviewed regularly and are comprehensive in their evaluation of the individual risks the children face. They contain clear strategies and direction for staff to follow to help minimise the risks.

Children going missing from the home is rare, but staff are aware of the protocols to follow to find and return children home quickly. There have been some instances of children leaving the home when trying to manage their emotions when they first arrived, but they have stayed in the area, and staff have been able to have them in sight at all times.

Behaviour is well managed through incentives and rewards as opposed to consequences. Staff follow children's care and therapeutic plans and remain calm and nurturing in their responses when children are communicating their feelings through their behaviour.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a committed, aspirational leader who keeps children at the centre of her practice. She is supported by a consistent core team of practitioners but is still carrying vacancies in the staff team.

The training on offer from the organisation is comprehensive. However, not all staff have completed training that is relevant to the children's specific identified needs.

Reports from the independent visit help the registered manager to continue to have a good oversight of the progress made in the home. However, some information is duplicated in each report, which can cause confusion, and this has not been challenged by the registered manager.

Team meetings and supervision sessions occur monthly and are both used to share good practice and new research as well as review how relationships with individual children are developing. However, there have been gaps in regular supervision sessions, and the records vary in length. There are some mistakes made in the records that could lead to confusion for staff.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards.' The registered person must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans (Regulation 5 (c)) In particular, ensure that any lack of response in relation to receiving copies of children's plans or minutes of reviews is escalated to senior managers in the local authority.	30 August 2025
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, ensure that records are accurate and contain language that children will understand.	30 August 2025

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that Regulation 44 reports contain current information. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 64, paragraph 15.5)
- The registered person should ensure that all staff complete training in autism and autism spectrum disorder. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards,' page 51, paragraph 10.1)

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: SC416599

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Leanne Smith

Registered manager: Jean Murray

Inspector

Sue Atkinson Millmoor, Social Care Inspector

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