

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 by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five boys, who have social and/or emotional difficulties. The home specialises in providing therapeutic care for children who have experienced early childhood trauma and disruptions in their care.

The current registered manager was registered with Ofsted on 19 June 2017.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 25 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/04/2018	Full	Outstanding
13/06/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/11/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and people: outstanding

Children thrive and make exceptional progress at this home. Staff are warm and attentive and have created a relaxed homely environment that helps children feel safe and fully supported. Because of this, children become increasingly settled, more resilient and grow in confidence the longer they are here. A parent said, 'Staff are really brilliant, they phone me regularly to keep me up to date with [child's name] progress. I know he is also happy, and he is very well looked after. I have seen a real change in him, he has really improved.'

Children's care and support are informed by a child-focused therapeutic model of care that supports children's physical, emotional and mental well-being. Staff training and ongoing guidance from the home's contracted therapist ensures that staff successfully nurture and help children explore their feelings and emotions safely. Because of this, children's known challenging and risk-taking behaviours prior to placement significantly decline.

Children's individual needs are well understood and met by staff. Children are regularly seen by the company's registered nursing professional, who successfully coordinates support for all their healthcare needs. She is also available to support staff to understand children's specific healthcare needs. Consequently, their healthcare needs are exceptionally well met.

Children enjoy excellent relationships with staff. Children appreciate the openness and honesty of staff, which helps build trust. Children are regularly consulted about day-to-day living arrangements as well as given the opportunity to contribute to their individual care planning. Staff encourage children to feel a sense of belonging in this home and to achieve this, children are included in decisions about the home. For example, children expressed a wish to develop an area to the rear of the property to create a cinema room and this is now being planned.

Children have excellent attendance at the company's independent school, which is within easy travelling distance of the home. Children's reports identify that they are all making measurable progress from their starting points. Daily contact between the home's staff and teaching staff means that there is a high level of communication which supports the good continuity of care between home and school. Additionally, staff are clearly familiar with children's educational progress and know how to support and promote their educational development.

Several children have experienced very positive moves from the home since the last inspection. In most cases, children have been successfully reunited with family members and returned to live at home.

Parents and professionals speak highly of staff and their achievements. One social worker commented, 'He made really good progress while in this home. They were able

to engage him to play in a football team and he regularly attended the youth club. He made many good friendships and his attendance at school was fantastic. The rehabilitation plan for him to return to his parent included contact increasing and then the ultimate move. Staff work closely with the authority to make this a very smooth transition for [child's name].

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

The home provides a safe environment for children. It is well maintained and furnished and free of any obvious hazards. Staff are meticulous in ensuring that regular health and safety checks are completed to ensure that the house remains a safe environment for children, visitors and staff.

Safeguarding practice is well established and continues to be highly effective. Staff receive comprehensive safeguarding training and benefit from ongoing training in child protection issues to ensure that their practice is kept up to date. Because of this, staff are knowledgeable and experienced in helping children to feel safe and keeping them safe.

Staff are fully conversant with children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. Individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans are regularly monitored, with strategies reviewed and updated. These provide staff with the information and knowledge they require to keep children safe. Monitoring activity identifies an overall reduction in risk-taking activities, including aggression, damage to property and self-harm. A parent commented, 'I am really happy that he is at this home. Staff are managing his behaviour well and have been able to calm him down.'

There have been no recent incidents involving children going missing from this home. However, during 2018 there were three incidents involving two children who have since moved on from the home. Staff managed these incidents appropriately and in accordance with locally agreed procedures, ensuring that children were quickly returned to the safety of the home.

The staff recruitment process is well established. It ensures that children are cared for only by adults that have been checked, vetted and deemed safe to work with children. Children benefit from a high level of staff supervision. Together, these measures ensure that they are suitably protected and kept safe from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The home is efficiently led and managed by a qualified registered manager and recently appointed deputy manager. The manager holds a level 4 qualification in children's residential care and is currently working towards her level 5 diploma in leadership and management in residential care.

The manager, who was on leave at the time of this inspection, is described by staff as being 'very committed' to the children and 'passionate' about all her children receiving a high standard of care. Staff demonstrated during this inspection that they clearly share

these qualities with their manager and hold her in high regard.

Staff possess a clear understanding of children's needs. They also have a firm grasp of the complexity of childhood trauma and its impact. Their practice is intuitive and skilled, ensuring that children receive the support they require to thrive and flourish. Staff work closely together to ensure that children receive a consistently high level of care. One staff member commented, 'I like how it is a team effort and I always have someone to turn to, no matter what the situation is. I enjoy coming to work.'

Staff say that they are exceptionally well supported in their roles by all levels of management and specialists, such as the company's registered nurse and therapeutic consultants. Although they identify regular professional supervision, frequent staff meetings and scheduled training events as first-rate, staff highlight the therapeutic input from consultants to be invaluable in shaping their practice. They identify this as one of their strengths as a home.

Internal and external monitoring arrangements are rigorous and work well together to promote transparency in the home's performance and inform the home's ongoing development planning. Further improvements have been made to the quality of recording in children's records to ensure that these continue to be comprehensive and illustrative of children's marked progress since coming to the home.

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: SC416599

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Rayrigg Show Rooms, Rayrigg Road, Windermere LA23 3DN

Responsible individual: Paul Jenkinson

Registered manager: Marie Friel

Inspector

Gillian Walters, social care inspector

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