

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 2007.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 April 2018

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: 13 June 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/06/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/11/2016	Full	Good
03/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children thrive in this home and make excellent progress from their starting points. Staff are nurturing in their approach and show children considerable emotional warmth. The home is welcoming and homely. It provides a very comfortable and child-friendly living environment. Consequently, children feel safe and well cared for and quickly develop a strong sense of belonging in this home.

Children's physical, emotional and mental health needs are a clear priority and well supported by the company's qualified health professional and contracted therapist. Both work in close partnership with staff and other health professionals to ensure that children remain healthy and understand the importance of healthy living.

Staff follow a research-based therapeutic approach to parenting. Staff use their sensitivity and empathy to successfully help children validate their feelings, feel accepted and well cared for. One parent commented, 'I feel he's safe. [Staff name] gives him motherly love.'

Children enjoy the stability and continuity of care that comes with living in this home. They share extremely positive relationships with staff and enjoy spending time with them. Children have access to a wide range of activities. These provide excellent opportunities for children to learn new skills, have fun and socialise with others living in their local community. For example, one boy regularly goes to help at a local animal refuge as he loves animals and is interested in eventually becoming a dog handler.

Children are consistently encouraged to contribute their views and wishes, to ensure that they feel included in their care arrangements and day-to-day activities within the home. Regular boys' meetings provide a good opportunity to collectively raise issues and make requests. However, children said that they can easily speak to any member of staff or their key worker if they have an issue or concern.

Children talked enthusiastically about how much they like staff and the help and support they provide. This is matched by parents and social workers, who rate the home highly. One social worker commented, 'Staff think outside the box. They have been brilliant. [Child's name] had difficulties and was struggling to sleep. They got him a talking book, and this really worked.'

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

Safeguarding practice is highly effective. Staff are well trained and benefit from having children's detailed histories prior to placement that inform them of the childhood experiences. Carefully constructed risk assessments take account of this, identifying children's individual risks and vulnerabilities. These provide detailed guidance to staff to ensure that children's needs are clearly understood and their safety promoted.

Staff are sensitive and skilled in building strong, trusting relationships with children. They understand the importance of these relationships in enabling children to feel sufficiently safe to explore their feelings and emotions.

Children are encouraged to learn alternative strategies to help them cope with the difficult feelings they may have. Children become more resilient and grow in self-confidence as a result. One parent commented, 'He had bad problems showing his emotions, but I can see a change in him. He listens, he doesn't run off or kick off when he can't get what he wants.'

Physical intervention is only ever used when it is absolutely necessary to keep children safe. These incidences are significantly reducing as children settle and feel more secure. For one child, the 'massive reduction' reported by his social worker is indicative of the 'brilliant progress' that he has made.

The staff recruitment process is well established to ensure that children are cared for only by adults deemed safe. Staff are attentive and ensure that children are appropriately supervised in accordance with their plan at all times. These measures further ensure that children are appropriately protected and kept safe from harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has high aspirations for the children in her care. She has clear expectations of her staff and works closely with the staff team to deliver a high standard of care that will ensure that children have the optimum opportunities required to succeed in life.

Staff are well supported to carry out their roles. In addition to core training that aims to promote children's safety and well-being, staff benefit from additional training sessions and regular guidance from the company's therapists to inform and support their 'parenting' practice.

The registered manager is well respected by her staff team and leads by example. She provides staff with regular and effective supervision, encouraging frequent reflection on their practice to ensure best practice that secures children's progress and achievement. Consequently, staff feel fully supported and committed to achieving the best for those children in their care.

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of the home's strengths and shows a strong commitment to develop her service further. Rigorous external and internal monitoring informs her development planning to ensure that the home is continually evolving and improving.

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(s)

Gillian Walters, social care inspector

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