

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC457254
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	North Lakes Children's Services Limited
Registered person address	Rayrigg Show Homes, Rayrigg Road, Bowness-on-Windermere, WINDERMERE, Cumbria, LA23 3DN

Responsible individual	Anthony Middleton
Registered manager	Caroline Rae
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	20/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC457254

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- The experience of living in this home significantly improves young people's life chances, they are equipped with skills that promote positive futures for them.
- Young people benefit from a stable, qualified and experienced staff team which results in them developing trusting and respectful relationships.
- The exceptional commitment shown by the registered manager and staff team ensures that young people feel highly valued. The registered manager strives to achieve the highest standards for the young people in her care.
- The manager and staff are ambitious and have high aspirations for the young people and show tenacity in helping young people achieve their goals.
- Young people have excellent engagement and attendance at school and often make better than anticipated progress in education.
- Young people's health needs are actively and appropriately met and they are supported to increasingly take responsibility for managing their own health. Their engagement in health services is very good.
- Young people's safety is extremely well managed resulting in them displaying very few behaviours that place them at risk of harm. They are very well educated about managing the risks that are pertinent to them.
- Family contact is recognised as being key to young people's wellbeing and extensive effort is put into ensuring that contact takes place in a positive way that is beneficial for young people.
- The quality of care planning is very high, with young people being actively involved in, and contributing to, their plans.
- Young people are consulted in a wide variety of ways to ensure that their voices are heard and their views taken into consideration.
- Good quality monitoring, both internally and externally, results in the service evolving and striving for improvement at all times.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The children's home is registered to provide accommodation and care for up to five young males age 14 to 18 with emotional and behavioural difficulties, including learning difficulties both within and outside the ASD spectrum. It is one of four homes owned by the company. It offers care to young people on a medium to long term basis.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
06/01/2015	CH - Full	Outstanding
14/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
The home provides young people with a very considered balance between nurture and developing independence. Staff fully understand the need to promote independence, and skilfully provide support in this area whilst continuing to offer a high level of care and a homely caring environment. Care planning is highly individualised and staff have a very good understanding of the uniqueness of each young person. Plans are developed in conjunction with the young people and this results in the young person feeling a sense of ownership and accountability in striving for and achieving their own goals. The relationships between staff and young people are close and mutually respectful. Young people understand why staff have high expectations in respect of achievement, participation and behaviour and are helped to take responsibility for their actions and behaviour in the home and the community. There are a number of systems in place to ensure that young people's views are taken account of which gives them a sense of value, and allows them some control within their lives. One example is the use of young people's questionnaires in the staff appraisal process. Some young people have complex health, emotional and behavioural needs. Their engagement with external services is excellent, despite them not always wanting to attend appointments. Staff spend time talking to, encouraging and supporting them to address their health, emotional and behavioural issues which results in them increasingly taking responsibility for maintaining their wellbeing. One young person has been supported to successfully self medicate. Another young person is accessing and making real progress in risk specific therapy. All young people attend routine health assessments and appointments with doctors, dentists and opticians. The nurse attached to the independent school operated by the provider provides a very good level of support in ensuring the health needs of the young people are met. Young people attend education and where they have completed year 11 they have college places identified in subject areas that they have an interest and aptitude in. Communication between home and school is very good and results in staff being equipped to support the young people with homework, revision or any issues that have arisen at school.	

The home advocates on behalf of the young people, challenging local authorities where they have concerns for the future plans for a young person. The registered manager is persistent in her efforts to ensure that all agencies are fulfilling their responsibilities and ensuring the young people have the best opportunities possible.

Young people benefit from a wide range of social, educational and recreational activities. Most young people participate in healthy activities such as cycling, rugby, fishing and ice skating. Others have interests in performing arts. Each young person is encouraged and supported to pursue their own interests. Unfortunately most young people are reluctant, or do not feel sufficiently confident, to participate in community clubs and groups which limits their opportunities for widening their social network. This is an area that the staff team actively try to address.

Young people benefit from increasing access to free time as they become older and more independent. This is managed well with the young people having a very clear understanding of the boundaries and that they need to behave responsibly and develop trust to gain increasing freedoms.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Risk assessment is a key strength of this home. High quality risk assessments are developed where risks are identified, understood and managed. Support provided in line with risk assessments ensures that young people become increasingly safe. A robust and proactive response to any identified risks reduces the risk of harm to young people and actively tackles areas where harm may occur. A particular area of risk for the young people at this home is internet use and social media. The staff acknowledge that the young people, due to their age and their preparations for independence, should have internet access and be permitted to use social media and therefore they need to be educated in online safety and in using the internet responsibly. A number of measures have been put in place including twice daily checks on internet use for some young people so that any issues are swiftly picked up and young people can have the opportunity to have further discussion about keeping themselves safe. One young person explained 'it's a bit of an invasion of my privacy, but I completely understand it's to keep me safe'. Many of the young people living in this home have made the transition from	

another of the company's homes set in more rural areas. This home is close to a city and allows young people the opportunity to learn about keeping themselves safe in a busier more urban environment. This transition allows young people to build on, and further develop, skills they have begun to acquire in their previous placements.

Young people at this home do not engage in substance misuse, criminal behaviour or violence. This demonstrates remarkable progress for most of the young people who, at the point of entering the care system, were displaying a number of these risk taking behaviours. Although the current young people in the home do not go missing, there are robust systems in place should a missing from home incident occur. Each young person has a missing from home plan which includes trigger behaviours and strategies for prevention. There are good systems in place for recording any missing incidents should these be needed.

The risks of sexually harmful behaviour and sexual exploitation are well understood and managed in a careful and sensitive way. The robust systems in place in respect of internet use minimize the risks of sexual exploitation or sexually harmful behaviours.

Young people say that they feel safe, and other agencies and family members consulted as part of this inspection report a high level of satisfaction with the home's actions in respect of keeping young people safe. Young people can identify a trusted adult who they feel confident will listen to them, should they have any concerns.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted in the home. There have been no incidents necessitating physical management for over eight months. The staff team are all committed to physical intervention being the last option for managing challenging behaviour and extensive work is undertaken to de-escalate and prevent the need for physical intervention. Staff willingly spend large amounts of time managing difficult behaviour through discussion, allowing the young person the time and space to explain their feelings and emotions, and to reason and negotiate towards a solution. Sanctions are rarely used. When they are the sanction is specific to the incident and the effectiveness of the sanction is reviewed.

Safe recruitment practices are used and staff are carefully selected and vetted to prevent young people being placed at risk of harm. Staff working at the home receive a very good level of ongoing training in protecting children and are clear about the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about the safety of a young person.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The home is led by a manager who holds the Level five diploma in Leadership and Management for Children and Young People, Residential services and has been in post since the home opened in December 2012. She keeps the young people at the centre of her practice and communicates the importance of this to her team. Her commitment to ensuring young people have the best possible outcomes is evident, one young person stated 'she is the best manager of any home I have been in, she goes the extra mile.' She creates a culture of high aspiration for the young people and the staff team alike and is ambitious for the young people in her care. The manager has achieved stability within the staff team since the last full inspection and this impacts positively on young people's relationships with and investment in staff. The staff team are mostly qualified to NVQ level three and are very experienced in working with children and young people. One member of staff who left the home managed the ending very sensitively for the young people so that the impact of him leaving was minimized. Staff morale is high and there is good communication between staff to ensure that care is consistent. The approach of the staff is professional, caring and committed. Young people report good relationships with staff with one young person commenting that 'they are awesome' and that 'the best thing about living here is the staff.' Staff receive regular formal and informal supervision which is appropriately recorded. Appraisals are completed and staff feel well supported in their roles. Staff report a very high level of satisfaction with the management of the home, citing the manager as 'creative, on the ball and keeps everyone focused on the young people'. There are clear lines of accountability within the staffing structure and staff are confident within their roles. The manager uses monitoring systems to good effect, learning from practice and feedback to improve the experiences of young people in the home. She is keen to identify areas of weakness and put plans in place to address these but also has the skills to acknowledge the strengths of the home and to commend the staff team where they deserve it. There is a clear development plan in place which drives continuous improvement. Positive working relationships with other agencies are evident, and effective working relationships and very good communication with parents and social workers are developed which helps to ensure a cohesive approach to achieving the	

best outcomes for young people.

The home's statement of purpose sets out clearly the ethos and objectives and the home works in accordance with these. The statement of purpose is kept under regular review. Case records are of a high quality, they are concise, relevant and kept up to date.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

© Crown copyright 2015