

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	22/08/2016
Unique reference number	1231405
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Lancashire County Council
Registered provider address	Lancashire County Council P O Box 100 Preston PR1 0LD

Responsible Individual	Paul McIntyre
Registered manager	Tracey Morris
Inspector	Elaine Clare

Inspection date	22/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

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Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are settled in the home, supported by a consistent team that knows the young people very well.
- Young people are individually making good progress in all aspects of their lives. They are engaged in education and their individual health needs are well supported by the staff team.
- Young people's views are actively sought in order to develop their individual placement plans. The staff team is committed to ensuring that young people's views are promoted and that they have choices in their day-to-day care.
- Parents and professionals commented on the staff team's commitment to ensuring that young people are well protected and safe while living at the home. Parents have confidence in the staff team and comment on the quality of relationships between their children and the staff.
- Young people are encouraged and supported to engage in community activities, enabling them to have new experiences alongside enjoying routine activities.
- An experienced and suitably qualified manager leads the staff, who are provided with good support, supervision and training to ensure that they are equipped to meet the known and emerging needs of all young people.
- The manager is committed to securing improvement in the home, using effective action plans to ensure that steady progress is made.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home provides residential respite care for up to six young people with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The home is run by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people benefit from a consistent, well-trained staff team that encourages and maintains positive and nurturing relationships with young people. Young people receive a good level of individualised care and support, which ensures that their specific needs are continually met. This enables them to make good progress in most aspects of their lives. One parent commented: 'She spends time socially with her friends and seems to love her time there. She is always full of smiles when I drop her off. She has an independent social life away from us, which is fabulous.' Staff deliver good-quality care, in line with placement plans that specifically identify young people's individual needs. These plans are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that young people's changing and emerging needs are met.</p> <p>All staff are trained in the administration of medication and in first aid, and they support young people effectively with their individual health needs.</p> <p>All the young people benefit from being in full-time education. They enjoy the routine of education. The manager and staff team develop working relationships with educational professionals, effectively using the start and end of the day to hand over positively any issues that have occurred during the day.</p> <p>The staff team knows the individual young people very well. A parent commented: 'I think they are wonderful, particularly the staff who work with my son. They know him really well and he is happy when he goes to the home.' Observations of interactions between staff and young people during the inspection highlighted how well the staff know the young people and have a clear understanding of their individual routines and preferred communication styles. Young people were observed during the inspection smiling and positively interacting with individual staff members, singing and playing in the light and sound room.</p> <p>The manager and staff team are adept at using a variety of communication tools, such as verbal, symbols and gestures, to ensure that young people's views are ascertained and listened to. Young people have become more confident in sharing their views, particularly in developing the decoration for the new building. During the inspection, young people were observed being supported to make choices about food that they wanted to eat that evening.</p> <p>Young people are being supported in their individual transition plans into adulthood. This enables choices about plans for their future to be considered and approved, given their complex learning needs.</p>	

Young people enjoy individual and group activities in the local community, such as going to the local hydrotherapy pool or tubing in a local park. This builds on young people's social interaction skills, and supports them to engage in the local area. Young people also enjoy regular weekend trips to the beach.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people are supported by a dedicated staff team that has a good understanding of safeguarding and the risks that individual young people present. They are supported by detailed risk management plans that enable the staff team to support young people to live safely in the home and to spend time in the community.</p> <p>Due to the specific needs of the young people, they do not go missing from home. They are supported at all times by individual staff. Sanctions are not used in the home. Young people are encouraged to behave in a manner that is safe for them and for others. Staff consistently implement the behaviour management plans that are in place, and they support young people to respond to their environment and feelings appropriately. At this first inspection, there have been two incidents of physical restraint. The manager has ensured that the whole staff team continues to undertake relevant training.</p> <p>The manager responds swiftly to any complaints or grumbles raised about the home. The manager has investigated and responded appropriately to a number of grumbles that have been raised since the home opened. She is transparent with parents and supporting agencies about the care provided in the home. One safeguarding concern has been investigated since the home opened. All agencies have been notified, with the appropriate action taken to ensure that young people are safe in the home. Individual team members are confident in their understanding of the whistleblowing procedure. There are clear recruitment procedures in place.</p> <p>A range of health and safety checks are routinely carried out to ensure that young people and staff live in a physically safe environment.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home is managed by an experienced manager, who has previously been registered within the local authority. She has now established herself at this home as the registered manager, and was registered in February 2016, when the home opened. She holds a level 5 leadership and management qualification. She has a number of years' experience working with young people with complex learning needs. Since taking on the role at this home, she has brought stability to the new team, which is made up of staff brought together from four different services. Parents, individual team members, senior managers and professionals commented at the inspection on the confidence that they have in the manager, on a day-to-day basis, and in her ability to secure continued development in the home.</p> <p>There have been some changes to the group of young people who access the home on a respite basis. However, all young people have continually made progress from their individual starting points, which the manager and staff team proudly talk about. For one young person, this progress is an increase in their vocabulary, supporting them to make their views and choices clearly heard.</p> <p>The manager has ensured that individual team members receive support through detailed and regular supervision sessions and annual appraisals. Team meetings are held on a monthly basis. These are well attended by the staff. The registered manager has started to develop staff who show potential to progress within the organisation, to ensure that succession planning is facilitated. Young people are looked after by a consistent staff team that knows and understands their individual needs very well. One member of staff commented: 'I just love my job. I'm very well supported.'</p> <p>All team members receive a range of training that assists them to support the young people whom they look after. The manager ensures that any specific training required to meet the individual needs of young people is facilitated, in order for the staff team to be equipped to care for the young people. For example, the staff team has recently received specific training about radicalisation. One member of staff commented about the training: 'It was very interesting. The training was really good at helping me to understand that all young people could be vulnerable to this.' The individual staff members are long-serving staff members who have a significant amount of experience working with the young people currently living at the home, and they have all achieved at least the level 3 qualification.</p> <p>The home is adequately resourced and delivers the services and support outlined in the statement of purpose. The manager ensures that there are sufficient numbers of staff on duty to meet the young people's individual needs. Shortfalls in the rota are covered by the existing staff team and a small number of in-house casual workers to ensure consistency for young people.</p>	

Monitoring of the home is well established. The manager makes good use of monthly action plans that underpin the service's development plan. The manager uses monthly monitoring to identify areas for improvement to support individual young people effectively. External monitoring continues to take place on a monthly basis. The manager has ensured that these reports are regularly received by HMCI.

The manager has established positive relationships with professionals and parents, taking an active role in the team around the individual young people. Professionals and parents commented on the improvement in communication with the home. Professionals commented: 'Whatever has been asked of them, I feel they have done. They provide a positive placement for [Name] as well as supporting the parents.'

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 children looked after 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 that 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 that 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 whom 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'.

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