

1247670

Registered provider: West Cumbria Care and Support

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered by a charitable organisation to provide care and accommodation under short-break arrangements for up to five children. The home is registered for children who have learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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: 21 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/08/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people receive a high quality of care from a highly motivated and dedicated staff team. Staff are warm and caring and they treat all children and young people with dignity and respect. Consequently, children and young people feel safe and well cared for and view the home as a happy place that they can come to.

Parents voice considerable confidence in the manager and his staff team. Parents know that the care their children and young people receive is exemplary. They express certainty in how much their children look forward to visiting the home and how much they enjoy their short break there. One parent commented, 'Staff always give me a call before a visit. As soon as she knows that they have been on the phone, she is upstairs getting her case ready. I have no anxieties about the service at all.'

Children and young people's visits and short breaks at the home are well planned. They are introduced to the home at their own pace to make sure that they feel safe and confident in the company of the staff who care for them. Children and young people are well matched during their short breaks, often with peers that they know from school or other activities. These short breaks provide excellent opportunities for children and young people to socialise with their friends, have fun and make new friends.

Children and young people regularly enjoy activities and trips that would not otherwise be accessible to them without additional support. Activities are wide ranging and specific to the child or young person's personal choice and interests. For example, some enjoy horse riding, sensory play, going to the cinema and swimming, while others enjoy more home-based activities such as baking and caring for the home's pet gerbils, fish and chickens.

Staff focus on children and young people's abilities rather than their disabilities. This allows them to challenge and often overcome those barriers that are believed to exist due to their disability. Because of this, children and young people have greater opportunity to explore their community, feel included and enjoy experiences that promote their self-esteem, independence and confidence.

Children and young people's complex health needs are well understood and managed. Staff work closely with community nursing and clinicians to ensure that they have a full understanding of the specific care needs of each child and young person. Staff are skilled in recognising and understanding children and young people's non-verbal communications, which include noises, gestures and facial expressions. This ensures that those children without recognised speech can make their views and wishes known and contribute to their short-break plans.

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

Children and young people's safety is of paramount importance to the manager and staff team. The main entrance to the home is locked, but this is primarily to protect children and young people from unwelcome visitors to the home. Staff provide a high level of

supervision in the home and during trips away from the home to make sure that children and young people are effectively supported, and that their safety is not compromised.

Children and young people's individual risk assessments provide staff with a wealth of information to help staff manage children and young people's complex care needs and keep them safe. All activities are rigorously assessed to minimise the potential for accidents to occur. One parent commented, 'I feel I can trust staff. I feel very comfortable with them and I can talk to any of them. I feel totally confident when he is there.'

The home has an excellent track record of keeping children and young people safe. There have not been any incidents or concerns associated with this home or staff team. However, staff regularly refresh their knowledge of child protection procedures and complete further training to increase their awareness of current safeguarding matters.

Excellent arrangements are in place for the safe transfer of medication from home and school to the short-break service. These arrangements make sure that staff get the required medication and would know if it had been tampered with before reaching the home. Staff are fully trained and experienced in the management and safe administration of medication. Because of their diligence, children and young people receive the necessary medication that they require without any errors that may have compromised their safety.

Staff recruitment is robust. All staff working in the home, including those that are not providing direct care to children and young people, are appropriately checked and vetted to ensure that they are unlikely to pose a threat to children and young people at the home. Those auxiliary staff that do not directly care for children and young people also participate in the home's induction process. They also complete safeguarding training so that they also have a good awareness of child protection matters and feel able to report any matters that concern them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is ambitious for children and young people using his service and is committed to providing a high standard of care. The registered manager has considerable experience of working with children and young people who have complex needs and learning disabilities. He currently is on track to complete his level 5 diploma qualification in leadership and management within the next few months.

The registered manager and his staff team have in-depth knowledge about each child and young person currently using the service. They work in close partnership with parents and relevant professionals to ensure that children and young people receive a consistently high standard of care that fully meets all their needs.

Social workers, parents and other professionals value the service the short-breaks home offers. They consistently praise the home for being so child focused in all that it does. They also recognise the considerable commitment of staff to enrich children and young people's life. One professional said, 'The feedback I have received from parents has been very good. Staff help children learn and their practice is very child led. They should be commended on the work that they do to help children's transition, and the outcomes

they achieve for them.'

The home is meeting its stated objectives as set out in its statement of purpose. Internal and external monitoring arrangements work well to scrutinise the operation of the home. These arrangements provide good scrutiny of the service, making sure that children and young people are safe and that their well-being is promoted.

Staff enjoy working in this short-break home and feel fully supported in carrying out their roles. They identify the quality and variety of training as being the key feature that helps them fulfil their roles. Staff have all completed a tremendous amount of training to ensure that they have the knowledge and skill to support children who have multiple and complex needs.

Staff receive regular professional supervision and have good opportunities to meet as a team. During staff meetings, staff can reflect on and review the care that they provide to children and young people. Staff meetings are also seen as further learning opportunities that assist their professional development.

The registered manager is eager and highly committed to improving and developing this short-break home. He is an excellent advocate for children and young people. His confidence and ability to challenge attitudes and expectations inspires his staff team to join him in overcoming those barriers that prevent children and young people achieving their full potential.

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: 1247670

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: West Cumbria Care and Support

Registered provider address: West Cumbria Care and Support, 26 Stanley Street, Workington CA14 2JD

Responsible individual: Catherine Parker

Registered manager: Mark Swanston

Inspector

Gillian Walters, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
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E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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