

1247386

Registered provider: Carlisle Mencap Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered by a charitable organisation to provide care and accommodation under short-break arrangements for six children. The home is registered for children who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The registered manager is a qualified social worker and has worked in the home for many years.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2019

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 1 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/07/2017	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The health and well-being standard is that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require. (Regulation 10(1)(c))	07/03/2019
The leadership and management standard requires the registered person to use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))	07/03/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	07/03/2019
The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child, are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a))	07/03/2019
Schedule 4 sets out the other information that the registered person must keep in relation to a children's home. The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and ensure that the records are kept up to date. (Regulation 37(1)(2)(a)(b)) In particular, ensure that a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home includes the manager and a record of the actual rotas worked.	07/03/2019

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children continue to enjoy their short-break stay at the home. The service is currently supporting 40 children. Each overnight stay is carefully planned to ensure that the individual needs of each child can be met and there is adequate staffing available.

The staff have expertise in supporting disabled children and make sure that children receive an excellent quality of personalised care. Staff understand the full range of children's individual needs, including how they communicate and process information, and the support that they require to feel safe and secure.

Prior to children coming to stay the managers complete an assessment of children's needs. They only agree to provide children with a placement once they are confident that they can meet the children's needs safely and effectively. The assessment involves the managers and staff visiting children in their homes and at school and gathering information from children's families, social workers, teachers and health professionals.

Children and their parents visit the home, often several times, to explore the space, meet staff and discuss the package of care. This also provides the manager and staff with useful information about how the children will manage in the environment and how they will get along with other children. The manager and staff carefully match the groups and children usually stay with the same groups. This provides children with an opportunity to develop new and long-term friendships.

Staff understand children's health needs, having regular communication with parents and social workers regarding specific health matters. Parents maintain primary responsibility for ensuring that health appointments are organised. This effective partnership working with parents and social workers is ensuring that children's health and medical needs are consistently addressed.

Children are meaningfully involved in the planning of, and participation in, fun activities. A wide range of activities provides children with new experiences that are tailored to meet their individual needs, such as trips to Blackpool, walks in the park, sensory activities and trips to the Chill Factor, an indoor ski resort. As a result, children experience new and exciting activities and build on their confidence and self-esteem.

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

Staff understand how to keep children safe and have a good knowledge and understanding of each child's complex needs and vulnerabilities. Staff recognise and interpret children's behaviour, including signs that indicate distress, or a change in mood. Consequently, a knowledgeable and competent team responds swiftly and effectively to minimise any potential harm caused by such changes. Furthermore, staff are well trained in meeting complex medical needs. This, alongside safe and effective medication procedures, is further enhancing children's safety.

Children are well supervised at all times. This significantly reduces the risks of them going missing; there have been no missing incidents at this home. Missing procedures are discussed to ensure that staff are kept fully up to date with actions required to minimise risks. Staff are therefore well prepared if such a situation should arise.

Positive behaviour is consistently promoted. Staff use effective de-escalation techniques and creative alternative strategies, including using humour to defuse situations appropriately. Staff discuss children's behaviours, and strategies are continually reviewed to ensure that they remain effective. Restraint and sanctions are rarely used in the home and there have been no recorded incidents in the last few years.

Staff have access to a wide range of training to ensure that they understand their roles in protecting disabled children. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of the signs, both physical and emotional, that may indicate that a child is at risk of harm. However, the recording and reporting of accidents requires improvement to be good. Although staff have recorded accidents, they do not always include whether parents and professionals have been notified or whether medical attention has been sourced. The manager reported that this is a recording issue, as all accidents are reported to parents. However, this cannot be evidenced in the recording in the home. A requirement is issued to address this shortfall.

Staff and volunteers working with children are carefully selected and vetted on a regular basis. This prevents unsuitable people from being recruited and protects children from harm.

All the required safety certificates are in place to evidence a safe and well-maintained building. Moreover, there are robust fire safety procedures in place. This includes individual fire risk assessments for each child and regular fire drills that involve children to ensure that everyone knows exactly what to do in the case of a real fire.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Children are cared for by a stable, well-established and long-standing team. The registered manager is a well-qualified, enthusiastic leader who places children at the centre of his practice. He is supported by a competent deputy manager. Together their management style ensures that staff are committed and dedicated to their work. This was confirmed in all the feedback received from both parents and professionals involved in children's lives, who confirmed that children love coming to stay at the home and have made progress in many areas of their lives.

Staff report that they are well supported in their roles and have regular discussions with managers. However, records do not demonstrate that staff have regular supervision or that team meetings take place on a regular basis. This does not provide an opportunity for staff to reflect on their practice and identify areas for development or training. This requirement is repeated from the previous inspection.

Records are not robust, and the management oversight of this does not demonstrate effective monitoring. This includes oversight of care plans and risk assessments. Children's files sampled are not consistent in the level of recording. Some documents have been left blank and other required documentation has limited information to demonstrate the needs of the children accessing the service. This fails to ensure that all staff have access to the correct information about children or an awareness of all known risks. Furthermore, not all plans are signed and dated to demonstrate that they have been reviewed or include the name of the author. A requirement is made to address this shortfall.

The duty roster does not reflect the actual hours that staff work in the home, including the registered manager. This hinders the audit trail of who is working in the home. A requirement has been made to address this shortfall.

The statement of purpose and workforce development plan have recently been updated. These include all information about the home and the staff working in the home. The service has well-established networks and relationships with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in meeting the needs of the children. Staff work closely with parents, social workers and health professionals. Feedback from all involved was very positive and they all commented on the good communication systems in place.

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: 1247386

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Carlisle Mencap Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit J3, Duchess Avenue, Kingmoor Park North, Carlisle
CA6 4SN

Responsible individual: Sheila Gregory

Registered manager: Frank Tripp

Inspectors

Michelle Edge, social care inspection manager
Claire Deary, social care inspection manager

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