

# 1231405

Registered provider: Lancashire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home provides residential short-stay care for up to six young people who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The home is run by a local authority.

There is an experienced and suitably qualified manager in post, who has been registered with Ofsted since February 2016.

**Inspection dates:** 28 to 29 November 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 **good**

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

**Date of last inspection:** 28 January 2019

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
12/09/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/08/2016	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
<p>The protection of children standard</p> <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))</p>	10/01/2020
<p>The care planning standard</p> <p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14(1)(a))</p>	10/01/2020

### Recommendations

- The children's home must produce a children's guide. The children's guide must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21)
- Please see regulation 23. Care must be taken to ensure prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Where the home has questions or concerns about a child's medication, they should approach an expert such as a General Medical Practitioner, community pharmacist or designated nurse for looked-after children. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- Specifically, in relation to fire safety. Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- In some cases, such as in children's homes caring for children with complex care

needs, restraint may be necessary as a consequence of a child's impairment or disability. Details about planned and agreed approaches to restraint or restraint techniques to be applied in the day-to-day routine of the child must be included in their EHC plan, statement of special educational needs or within their care plans. This could include, for example the use of a device, such as outlined in paragraph 9.46. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.43)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children are provided with safe and effective care by a consistent staff team whose members know them well. Parents and external professionals provide consistently positive feedback about the standard of care provided to children. One parent said, 'Each and every one of the staff that we have spoken to and seen over the years have made us feel that [name] is so special, and they have cared for her in the best possible way.'

Children enjoy their visits to the home. A number of parents commented that their children show excitement when arriving for their stays. Children are encouraged to socialise and have fun. Staff plan children's visits carefully, ensuring that they have opportunities to engage in activities that they enjoy. This supports them to achieve and grow in confidence and independence.

The staff team demonstrates a good understanding of children's needs. However, some aspects of care planning could be improved. Some children's individual needs are not clearly addressed within their care plans, which means that staff do not have clear written guidance about the support they require. These shortfalls could lead to children receiving inconsistent care.

Staff work closely with parents and external professionals to help ensure that children's health needs are met safely. Children's medication is generally well managed. However, in some examples individualised protocols lack clarity. A recommendation is raised to support improvement in this area.

Children joining the service, as well as those moving on, are very well supported. Children and their carers are given the opportunity to visit, meet staff and discuss any anxieties that they may have. In addition, staff play an active role in preparing children who are moving on to new services.

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

Parents and external professional express high levels of confidence in the service and without exception, report that children receive safe and effective care. One parent spoke of her initial anxiety when entrusting the care of her daughter to staff. She said, 'I was soon reassured that she was in safe hands and I have never had cause to doubt it since.'

Staff demonstrate good understanding of the risks to individual children's safety and well-being. However, it was identified that the quality of written guidance on managing risk was variable. For example, some risk assessments did not include up-to-date information, and guidance for staff about how to manage risks was in some cases, incomplete.

Staff are skilled in providing positive behaviour support. Their consistent and positive approach helps children to develop safer behaviours over time. Records of incidents demonstrate that staff are able to de-escalate most challenging situations and as a result, children rarely display crisis behaviours that require staff to physically intervene.

Due to the nature of their needs, some children require constant support and supervision. In addition, there are circumstances where children's freedom of movement may be restricted in order to protect them from harm. It is recommended that in such circumstances, multi-agency discussion and agreement is clearly recorded and that the child's care plan contains clear information about planned restrictions.

Children are provided with safe, well-maintained accommodation. Regular health and safety checks are in place to ensure that all areas of the home and facilities remain safe and fit for purpose. All staff are carefully recruited and required to undergo a range of background checks prior to starting their employment. This helps to ensure that employees are of suitable character.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

There is a suitably qualified manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since February 2016. Staff, parents and external professional speak highly of the registered manager and express satisfaction with the leadership of the home.

The home is extremely well equipped and adequately resourced. There is a stable staff team, which means that children benefit from consistency. The manager was able to provide examples of staffing levels being adapted to meet individual children's needs.

External professionals describe positive partnership working with the home. A social worker commented, 'The service that is provided is a "home from home" environment. From my experience, parents and carers also feel this way and are reassured by the excellent communication from the staff members.'

Staff express satisfaction with the standard of training and support they receive. All staff engage in a comprehensive training programme and are encouraged to regularly update their learning. Regular team meetings and supervision sessions enable staff to reflect on their practice, share ideas or raise concerns.

There are systems in place to monitor the quality and safety of the service provided at the home. However, the manager could make more effective use of these to help ensure that shortfalls and areas for development are identified promptly. This would support continuous improvement and development.

## **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:** 1231405

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered Provider:** Lancashire County Council

**Registered provider address:** PO Box 78, County Hall, Fishergate, Preston PR1 8XJ

**Responsible individual:** Michael Nunn

**Registered manager:** Tracey Morris

## Inspector

Marie Cordingley, social care inspector

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