

# 1274089

Registered provider: Lonsdale Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation. It provides care for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or social difficulties, and/or learning disabilities.

The registered manager has managed this home since it was registered in April 2018.

**Inspection dates:** 7 to 8 January 2020

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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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:** 22 November 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2018	Full	Good

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

### Recommendations

- Ensure that the registered person to 'seeks to involve' the placing authority that places a looked-after child in the home, which in practice means working primarily with their statutory social worker. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.5)

In particular, the registered person should chase the allocated social worker for any missing documentation that the home requires.

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and that the training available meets the needs of the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, provide training for staff on attachment, autism spectrum disorder and internet safety.

- Enable the registered person to make best use of the independent scrutiny of the home by ensuring that the majority of independent visits are unannounced. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

- Ensure that, as set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that the supervision of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

In particular, ensure that staff receive sufficient supervision to support them during their probationary periods, which is in accordance with the organisation's policy.

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people who live in this home make excellent progress. The staff team is largely stable, so young people benefit from receiving consistent care and can invest in relationships with staff without the fear that they may be leaving soon. There are clear routines in the home, which staff adhere to. This predictable care helps young people to feel safe and secure.

Extremely positive and respectful relationships between staff and young people were evident during the inspection. Staff are enthusiastic about their job and want to spend time with young people. There is 'family time' in the home each evening, where staff

and young people spend positive time together, such as sharing a meal, followed by a game of football. Young people respect this. Young people get on well together for the majority of the time. They accept each other's differences and can enjoy positive time together. One young person refers to the other young people as his 'foster brothers', confirming their positive relationship.

The home is warm and welcoming. It is decorated to a high standard. It is a bright and attractive space that young people are proud of. There is plenty of space for young people to spend time alone or together. Young people's bedrooms reflect their interests and personalities. For example, one young person keeps their pet hamster in their room. Consequently, young people enjoy spending time in the home.

Living in this home has a positive impact on those who reside here. All the young people are making good progress across all areas of their development. Social workers spoke highly of the home and the difference it is making. One social worker commented, in feedback to the home, 'Staff provide excellent care. They have a great understanding of the young people in placement and the knowledge and experience to manage any challenging behaviours.' Another said, 'I love visiting the home. It's always calm and staff are really welcoming.'

All young people attend school regularly. This is a significant improvement for some. They are making good educational progress, and one young person is in the process of transitioning from a specialist provision back into mainstream school. This is impressive progress and will improve his likelihood of success in the future. Young people have friends in school and staff support them to spend time together outside school if they choose to do so.

Young people receive encouragement to pursue their individual interests and hobbies. One young person is interested in music and plays the guitar, while all young people enjoy playing on their games consoles, like other young people of their age. However, they also enjoy physical activities, such as football, rugby and swimming. Staff are alert to the need to keep young people active and healthy. Participation in such activities also helps to build young people's confidence and self-esteem. One young person said, 'This is a good home, the staff are great. They have really helped me build up my confidence. I am in a much better place than when I moved here.'

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

Young people are well settled in this home and trust the staff who care for them. They feel safe and secure here. They know how to make a complaint, although none have been made since the last inspection over a year ago. They see the registered manager daily and expressed confidence in him following up any concerns. One young person commented that the manager was arranging for him to see an advocate, following a conversation they had had the previous day. Young people feel listened to.

Good placement matching ensures that the needs of any new young people are compatible with the needs of those already living in the home. The rules and boundaries in the home are clear. This includes rules about internet access and giving mobile phones to staff overnight. New young people quickly adapt to the routines of the home.

Young people living in the home rarely engage in risk-taking behaviour. They do not smoke, use drugs or drink alcohol. Staff allow young people to take age-appropriate risks as they get older. There have been a small number of incidents of young people going missing from home since the last inspection, as young people have been wanting to spend time with their family or friends. However, young people are now learning that staff will support such contact if young people make arrangements with them in advance. One young person said, 'It's my own doing, but I sometimes make the wrong choices. Staff are helping me with this.' Clear and detailed chronologies evidence that staff act swiftly and make contact with the appropriate people/agencies when any incidents do occur..

Risk assessments demonstrate that staff assess a range of risks associated with each young person's behaviour. Strategies are agreed to manage these risks safely. These documents contain details of recent behaviours and are subject to regular review. Staff demonstrate that they are familiar with these documents.

All staff receive training in the safe use of restraint. However, incidents are extremely rare, as staff skilfully defuse the majority of incidents. However, when such incidents do occur, the records of these are detailed and show that the staff know when to intervene in order to keep the young person or others safe.

The ethos of the home is to reward good behaviour, rather than sanction poor behaviour. Young people have weekly incentives to help them meet their individual targets, as well as for education attendance. However, staff also reward young people's individual achievements. Examples of this include young people being rewarded for positive feedback at parents' evening and keeping calm when the home's car had a puncture. This helps to motivate young people and promote success. Sanctions are used on occasion, but are mainly restorative in nature, such as helping staff to repair damage caused in the home.

Staff recruitment has a strong emphasis on safeguarding. This ensures that only those who are suitable are employed to work in the home.

Routine health and safety checks in the home ensure young people's safety and well-being. Regular fire drills also ensure that young people know what to do in an emergency.

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

The registered manager has worked in this home since it was registered. He is an experienced manager and has an appropriate management qualification. He is well

respected by young people, staff and other professionals. He is passionate about achieving good outcomes for children, and advocates strongly for them.

Records are organised clearly and management oversight is good. The internal and external monitoring of the home are used to drive forward improvements. However, visits that provide the external monitoring of the home are usually announced. This does not allow the independent visitor the opportunity to observe practice in the home when staff are not expecting them to visit. This reduces the effectiveness of these visits.

Staff meetings are regular, ensuring that staff are up to date regarding any current issues. Staff have high aspirations for the young people living in the home. They reported that they enjoy working here and they ensure that the environment is homely and welcoming. One staff member commented, as part of the Ofsted annual survey, 'I love having fun with the children, being able to do a variety of activities and creating a safe and happy environment. My colleagues are very supportive, and I think it's a great place to work.'

Mandatory training, which includes training in safeguarding, is completed during the staff's inductions. However, staff would benefit from having specific training to meet the needs of the young people living in the home. This includes training in attachment issues, autism spectrum disorder and internet safety. This would ensure that staff are able to meet the needs of the young people in their care.

In the main, staff receive regular, supportive supervision and an annual performance appraisal. However, staff have not always received an increased level of supervision during their probationary periods, as the organisation's policy as the organisation's policy dictates. This would ensure that new staff feel fully supported.

Social work professionals were complimentary about the home and described communication as 'excellent'. However, the manager does not always chase up documentation that has not been received from the local authority in a timely manner'

## **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:** 1274089

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

**Registered provider:** Lonsdale Care Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 34 Broadacre, Caton, Lancaster, Lancashire LA2 9NH

**Responsible individual:** Simon Wright

**Registered manager:** Peter Birkby

## **Inspector**

Mandy Williams: social care inspector

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