

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.

The home's manager has been registered with Ofsted since the home opened, under new management, in December 2016.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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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	outstanding
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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: 27 November 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2018	Full	Outstanding
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 consistently high standard of personalised care during their short-break stays at this home. Short break planning is meticulous. It ensures that staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of children and young people's complex needs and how these are to be met. This provides parents with the reassurance that they need to know that their children and young people are effectively safeguarded and cared for.

Children and young people are central to all planning activity. Staff value and respect their views and wishes and incorporate these into their personal care planning and day-to-day activities. Staff aim to consistently improve children and young people's experience while at the home. Staff are committed to them getting the most out of their time there, with plenty of fun and enjoyment. One young person said, 'I really love coming here. I don't have a favourite member of staff because I like them all. It's fun here.'

Staff are patient, attentive and nurturing. They treat children and young people with dignity and respect, valuing their unique personalities and abilities. Children and young people look forward to coming for their short breaks at this home and thoroughly enjoy their time here. One parent commented, 'He really loves it here. The facility is great, but the staff go above and beyond. They listen to him, make sure he is included, and they will always promote his choice in what he does. Staff have instilled me with confidence.'

Children and young people all benefit from a wide range of activities and experiences that enable them to develop greater independence and promote their inclusion in the community. The manager and staff are successful in moving past perceived barriers to ensure that children feel valued and included in their community. Consequently, children and young people gain confidence in new skills learned, and they have excellent opportunities to socialise with their peers and to make new friendships.

Parents spoke highly of the home and the considerable support provided by staff. They frequently commented about how much their children and young people enjoy coming to this short-break home and how much it is valued. One parent said, 'He is happy to come to [Name of home]. He loves the sensory room. We couldn't be without [Name of home]. It lets us re-charge our batteries.'

Effective partnership working between the home's staff team and other professionals ensures that children and young people receive all the support and services that they need. One professional commented, 'Parents are always rather anxious in considering a service like this. However, once they visit, they wish they had come sooner. Staff are very friendly and welcoming.'

Professionals unanimously agree that the home provides excellent care and support to children, young people and their families. One social worker commented, 'I think they are wonderful. I have a number of success stories. Children and young people are always well looked after, and their activities are tailored around what they like to do. They do a fantastic job and provide an invaluable service for families.'

The home continues to improve and evolve, developing new partnerships in the local community and welcoming other care professionals to use the comfort of the home to meet with parents and carers. A professional commented, 'The children are happy, and the home is immaculate. I'm very critical but I would say it's outstanding. They are extremely flexible to ensure children and young people's needs are met.'

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

Children and young people's safety are of paramount importance to all staff working at the home. Excellent individual and activity-based risk assessments take account of their individual vulnerabilities and how these need to be supported. Consequently, children and young people feel , and parents and professionals confirmed that the quality of their planning and support keeps them safe. One parent commented, 'My son's confidence has grown and is improving all the time. He surprises me. He feels like he's at home.'

The home environment is fully risk assessed to ensure that it remains a safe place for all children and young people. Individually, children and young people have their own evacuation plan, should this be necessary in the event of a fire or another emergency. This level of planning and regular fire drills ensure that staff are familiar and practised in evacuating children and young people in an emergency to keep them safe.

External doors, including fire doors, are kept locked as a precaution to keep children and young people safe from unwelcome visitors who may pose a risk to such vulnerable children and young people. However, despite close supervision and doors being locked, one young person has managed to exit the building and run away from the home since the last inspection. Staff followed, and he was quickly located and safely returned to the home. This isolated incident took everyone by surprise as neither his social worker nor staff had been made aware of the likelihood of this type of behaviour. Safety arrangements have since been again reviewed with the local fire safety officer to ensure that this cannot happen again. Detailed recording of this incident clearly reflected that this incident could not have been anticipated.

Excellent staff training and staff awareness of dealing with such emergencies, meant that staff worked collaboratively and managed this situation effectively without the young person coming to any harm. Professionals and parents were satisfied that the home responded effectively to the situation.

Children and young people at this home often have extremely complex healthcare needs. Because of this, staff regularly deal with a high volume of medication, including controlled drugs. Staff are fully trained to safely manage and administer medication, ensuring that no mistakes are made. Their diligence and attentiveness ensure that children and young people's health needs are safely managed during their short breaks at this home.

Staff recruitment and selection are robust. The manager and his senior staff are familiar with safer recruitment practice and do not allow any new staff member to work in the home until they have been fully checked and vetted. Consequently, children and young people's safety is not compromised by unsuitable adults who may cause them harm.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager holds high aspirations for all children and young people who visit and enjoy short breaks at this home. Together with his staff team, he shares an unwavering commitment to ensuring that all children and young people are included in those activities and experiences that they show interest in. The manager and staff encourage a 'can do' attitude to optimise children and young people's opportunities to have fun and develop their independence. The manager and his staff team frequently challenge any perceived barriers, promoting children and young people's involvement in appropriate risk-taking activities, relative to their development and individual needs.

Staff work in close cooperation with children and young people's parents and carers and a wide range of healthcare professionals. This ensures that their care during short breaks is of the highest standard. The manager actively encourages and embraces parents' ideas and suggestions for the continued improvement of the home and service it provides.

The home is working in accordance with its statement of purpose and is providing a service that is widely valued in the community. Because of this, some local businesses have shown their support with donations and further assistance to raise the profile of the home. For instance, one local business has created and donated a mascot costume for the home to help raise awareness and funds not only for children and young people, but for their parents and siblings to enjoy organised family trips out.

Staff working in this home said that they love coming to work and enjoy and feel privileged to spend time with the children and young people they care for. They are confident in their caring capacity given the regular support they receive through professional supervision, training and communication with other professionals with specific expertise.

Excellent internal and external monitoring arrangements are well established in this home. Regular reporting ensures that there is transparency between the home and Ofsted. The manager uses these monitoring arrangements and frequent

opportunities to consult with his staff, parents and carers to provide the basis of the home's continuous development planning. Staff are encouraged to think creatively to ensure that children have every opportunity to reach their full potential.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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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