

SC416599

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Service Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of several homes owned and operated by a private organisation. This home provides care for up to five children with social and emotional difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in November 2023.

Two children were living at the home at the time of this inspection.

The inspector only inspected the social care provision at this site.

Inspection dates: 22 and 23 February 2024

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 December 2022

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2022	Full	Good
07/06/2021	Full	Good
23/10/2019	Full	Outstanding
25/04/2018	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have positive experiences while living in this home. They are supported by a nurturing, knowledgeable staff team to make progress in all areas of their lives. A parent said, 'I am very proud of the young man he is becoming.'

The views of children are central to their care-planning. Records are written to the children and demonstrate the work that is undertaken with them to understand their previous trauma. This is helped by an independent psychologist who works with children and adults to help children develop resilience as they move towards adulthood. Key-work sessions are individualised, regular and link with children's care plans. This gives children structure and stability while addressing their individual needs and risks.

Family time is supported by the staff, who ensure that children's views are central to the development of these relationships, at a pace that is comfortable for children.

Hobbies are seen as important. Children are encouraged to join groups that they choose, for example in sport and theatre, to help develop their confidence, socialisation and health. Children's general health is taken seriously, and the home has access to a registered nurse who ensures that health needs and advice are addressed. The nurse ensures that medication is safely administered and that records are accurate. In one medical report, a recommendation for additional vitamins had not been addressed or added to the child's health plan.

Behaviour is managed effectively and rewards are used to encourage positive behaviour. Physical holds are used only as a last resort and have not been needed for a considerable length of time. This shows progress for children and their understanding of their own thoughts and feelings as well as those of others.

Children are aware of how to complain. Records show that the last recorded complaint from a child was investigated thoroughly, but do not show that the outcome of the complaint was fed back to the child or their response to this. This means that the child may not have been offered the opportunity to take their complaint further if they wished.

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

Risks to children are known and understood by the adults caring for them, who are helped to manage these through clear strategies in up-to-date risk-management plans. However, the evaluation of risk is not based on any identified criteria. This means that assessments of risk and subsequent ratings may not always be fully accurate.

Children said that they feel safe in the home. They can talk to staff and tell them about worries, concerns or situations that they have found themselves in, including those online, that may result in harm. This means that staff can help children to manage situations that occur and to understand how to increase their own ability to keep themselves safe.

Children rarely go missing from the home. However, this was not always the case, and records detail the plans that were followed to find and return children safely.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an effective manager, who was previously the deputy manager, offering a level of consistency and stability to staff and children. She is supported by a new deputy manager and a small core staff team.

The manager is aware of the strengths of her team and has plans in place to develop the staff's practice and the home environment. Team meetings are regular and used to share information and improve staff practice, including that of members of the team working overnight.

Staff are suitably qualified and there is a training programme in place to ensure that they have the necessary skills to meet the complex and challenging needs of the children in their care.

Supervision is regular and details reflection and challenge to practice as well as discussion about the children to help improve their lives.

Staff and professionals linked to the service said that the manager is supportive and available. She maintains a monitoring system to track children's progress and the general running of the home and ensures that records are accurate and completed in a timely manner.

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

Statutory requirement

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, The 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 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. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(i))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the calculation of risk is based on agreed criteria.</p>	31 March 2024

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff follow up any recommendations made in children's medical reports. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.18)
- The registered person should ensure that feedback on the outcome is given to any child making a complaint and that their response is recorded. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.13)

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: SC416599

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: North Lakes Children's Service Limited

Registered provider address: Malvern View, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 4AD

Responsible individual: Maxwell Turner

Registered manager: Jean Murray

Inspector

Susan Atkinson-Millmoor, Social Care Inspector

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