

## Children's homes – Interim inspection

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| <b>Inspection date</b>             | <b>11/01/2017</b>                                    |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | <b>SC022447</b>                                      |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>          | <b>Interim</b>                                       |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>           | <b>Children's home</b>                               |
| <b>Registered provider</b>         | <b>Nugent Care</b>                                   |
| <b>Registered provider address</b> | <b>99 Edge Lane, Edge Hill,<br/>Liverpool L7 2PE</b> |

|                               |                          |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Anne-Marie Carney</b> |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Susan Hatton</b>      |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Sharon Lloyd</b>      |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>11/01/2017</b> |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Good</b>       |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>None</b>       |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |                   |
| <p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>good</b> at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has <b>improved effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>The leadership and management of the home has improved. The registered manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the home well. She has taken action to address all the recommendations made at the last inspection. This has led to all-round improvements in the home's records, staff competence and young people's safety.</p> <p>Staff have developed and embedded new knowledge and skills. Consequently, staff provide very good supervision and care to young people at risk of going missing and sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Partnership working has significantly improved as the manager has grown in confidence under good guidance from the responsible individual. The manager appropriately challenges practice where other professionals are not fully meeting their responsibilities to young people. She advocates more successfully for young people and this helps them to receive services and care that meet their needs.</p> <p>The home has built stronger working relationships with the local authority virtual head and the post-16 education advisor. This has helped the manager and staff to increase their knowledge and understanding of young people's rights to education and is enabling them to be more effective in ensuring young people have an appropriate education placement. They seek advice as needed and are more proactive in working with placing authorities to meet each young person's education needs.</p> <p>New electronic filing systems have been introduced. They support the manager and deputy to maintain a good overview of practice and records; and to ensure that all staff are up to date with young people's progress and changes in their placement plans. The management team have a very good understanding of young people's needs. They, and the staff team, benefit from effective supervision and from advice and guidance from a psychologist. They review young people's needs and progress each week, updating risk assessments and behaviour management plans regularly. Good communication between managers and staff ensures that staff provide young people with consistent and effective, nurturing care.</p> |                   |

Three young people have been admitted to the home since the last inspection and three have left. The home works closely with placing agencies to facilitate smooth transitions both to and from the home. Despite this, two young people have had unplanned placement endings.

One placement ending was as a result of increasing concerns for a young person's safety over a short timeframe. The home was proactive in identifying and responding to a young person's dangerous behaviour that placed her at high risk of sexual exploitation and crime. Through maintaining very close supervision and being alert to changes in the child's demeanour and behaviour, staff recognised she was starting to be groomed and drawn into dangerous behaviour, and were able to provide strong evidence of this, despite the young person's protestations. The home appropriately initiated a safeguarding strategy meeting which led to her readmission to a secure placement. Staff worked collaboratively with the police in a way that helped reduce the young person's distress at moving back to a secure placement. This has protected the young person from further harm and she maintains positive relationships with the staff team.

A young person's long term placement disrupted when a number of adult placements were considered but pulled out at short notice following introductions. This, and further uncertainties about her future, led to the young person feeling rejected and becoming increasingly anxious. Staff were reassuring, sensitive and compassionate, supporting her very well through this extremely difficult time and into adulthood. The management team advocated well on her behalf. Sadly, the placement ended when she seriously assaulted staff and made threats of further harm which necessitated police intervention. Since her discharge, the manager and staff have continued to support her with health appointments and phone calls. The young person is benefitting from ongoing, supportive and caring relationships with the staff team that help her to feel valued and cared for. The home has appropriately reflected on the young person's placement and the placement ending with support from a psychologist. This has helped staff to understand, accept and learn from this experience.

The third young person who has left made extremely good progress at the home. She moved on appropriately in a planned way, back to her home authority.

Young people are fully engaged in transition planning and in their care plans and other decisions about their daily lives. Staff help young people already in placement to prepare for another young person moving in and support the development of positive relationships between young people as far as possible. Young people raise any concerns with the manager or staff and confide in them about personal matters and worries. They are confident that staff will be sensitive and act in their best interests.

The home is planning for a young person to be admitted in the near future. A good impact risk assessment and transition plan are in place and the home is assisting

the placing authority to find a suitable, local education placement. The young person has already visited the home and chosen soft furnishings for her bedroom. Through the careful and well managed transition planning, she has begun to invest in the home, is developing a positive rapport with the staff team and is looking forward to the move.

Staff make sure they listen to young people and record their views in care plans. This includes how young people want to be cared for, what upsets them or makes them angry and how to help them stay calm and feel positive. This helps young people to feel confident, from the start of the placement, that staff have their best interests at heart and will support them. Many young people initiate and maintain contact with the staff team after leaving. They recognise how much the home has supported them to improve their lives and future prospects.

One young person currently lives at the home and is making good, all-round progress. The home facilitated her attendance at school and has worked well with the virtual school and local college when her school placement broke down. This enabled her to access a suitable short course in preparation for further education and a move to a supported living placement. The young person's safety needs have been very well met. Despite being missing from home repeatedly from previous placements, she has not run away from this home. The young person has a good understanding of how to use social media safely. Staff help her to understand about safe sexual and social relationships. The young person says she is well looked after and is happy at the home, although looking forward to moving on. She has good relationships with most of the staff team. Staff are fully trained to understand her specific health needs and are actively supporting her to take good care of her health.

Staff manage young people's behaviour by providing warm, nurturing relationships and clear boundaries. They show commitment to young people in the face of extreme challenge and maintain a positive outlook which helps young people to feel cared for. Young people say that staff look after them well. They clearly enjoy spending time with staff and are relaxed in their company. The home uses restraint only as a last resort to prevent injury to a young person or others. Since the last inspection, there have been no restraints and a minimal number of sanctions. Two young people have made a complaint, both of which have been satisfactorily addressed.

Young people do not always get the high level of support they need to keep their bedrooms clean and tidy. Consequently, some bedrooms are, on occasion, dirty, untidy and unaired; and occupants sleep with duvets without covers. This undermines the otherwise good work the staff do to help young people build a positive self-image.

Training completed in 2016 is not recorded on staff training profiles. Consequently, training records are not up to date and do not reflect that staff have completed mandatory and specialist training, which has improved their knowledge and skills.

This impedes the manager from maintaining a good overview of individual staff members' training and development needs and planning further training.

Although staff report and demonstrate they are well informed, handover records lack detail and do not demonstrate that pertinent issues have been handed over to oncoming staff teams, in particular night staff. This means the home cannot demonstrate that all staff are fully informed of incidents and concerns.

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home provides transitional placements for children moving on from the adjacent secure children's home as well as short- and long-term care for children who have complex emotional and behavioural needs.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 28/04/2016      | Full            | Good                    |
| 24/02/2016      | Interim         | Declined effectiveness  |
| 28/09/2015      | Full            | Good                    |
| 07/01/2015      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 12/06/2014      | Full            | Good                    |

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

### **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that staff meet a child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would. Establish routines to allow for children's rooms to be cleaned regularly. In particular, ensure that children have clean bedding and are supported to keep their personal space pleasant, clean and welcoming. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, para. 3.7; page 16, para. 3.20)
- Ensure that the home's workforce plan is regularly updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff, including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, para. 10.8)

## **What the inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.



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