

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035971
Inspector	Chris Scully
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	St Helens Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Children & Young Peoples Services Atlas House, 2 Corporation Street ST. HELENS Merseyside WA9 1LD
Responsible individual	Jennifer Louise Turnross
Registered manager	Paul James Spencer
Date of last inspection	12/06/2014

Inspection date	10/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home was last inspected on the 12 June 2014. There have been no changes to the management and the home continues to be led by a dynamic and supportive management team. Young people benefit highly from a supportive and committed staff team. As a result young people are continuing to make good progress across all areas of their development and enjoy their time at the setting.

Improved monitoring by the Registered Manager means any shortfalls in recording are quickly identified and addressed. Reports by the Registered Manager and the independent person for the organisation are now sent into Ofsted within the prescribed timescales. Reports by the independent persons are not consistent. This is because they do not consistently clearly evaluate or analyse the care practice.

The home has improved upon recording standards in a number of areas. Missing from care risk assessments are more detailed and outline the actions staff are taking to minimise the risk of a young person being missing from care. Staff are aware of the home's missing from care procedure and are acutely aware of the associated risks for each young person. Improved recording and review of young people's records ensure files no longer contain conflicting information. The systems for the administration and recording of medication are robust.

On a small number of occasions records are not reviewed in line with the home's policy. Consequently, they may contain outdated information. Also some young people do not have current epilepsy care plans on file. This means staff may not be aware of any changes to the plan, such as when to call the emergency services. Overall, records are much more detailed, evaluative and demonstrate the progress young people are making. For example, some young people enjoy a healthier lifestyle as they are trying a wider range of foods.

Risk assessments clearly identify many perceived risks to them and how these are minimised. Clear procedures are in place should an allegation be made against a member of staff and these are followed in principle by senior managers in the authority. However the procedures need to be consistently applied in order to protect any member of staff who is subject to the allegation.

Consultation with young people has significantly improved since the last inspection. Highly personalised consultation documents which are designed around each individual young person's needs are used effectively to secure their views. This means young people have an exceptionally strong voice within the home. Their wishes and feelings are actively sought and acted upon, for example when purchasing new games for computer consoles.

As a result of two young people initially asking for 'sleepovers' at the home with their friend. The Registered Manager has now revised the systems for organising stays so that young people can stay more often with their friends. This effectively promotes their social skills and means they can enjoy activities such as pamper nights and going to their first 'real' football match with their friends.

Young people giggle in delight as they regale visitors with stories of when the animals visited the home and how they got to hold the lizard, snake and skunk. One young person mischievously asks for a photograph of them with the skunk to shock their mum with. Young people's cultural and religious heritage is respected and celebrated. This means young people are able to talk openly with staff about this. Staff continue to be extremely supportive of families, for example, effectively supporting contact with families who live abroad. This means young people are able to keep in regular contact with those people who are important to them.

Young people enjoy increased independence as a result of their stays. Some young people are now able to help with the laundry and to wash the dishes. Others enjoy a lively social life at the home and thoroughly enjoy the opportunities to go to the local public house for a meal with their friends and staff. One young person made sure they had the pen and paper so that they could order the meals for everyone. Young people enjoy very positive relationships with staff. They clearly enjoy spending time with them and the sounds of young people's laughter can be heard throughout the house.

Information about this children's home

The home provides short-term breaks and some respite care for children and young people with physical and learning disabilities who are aged from 7 years to 17 years.

The home is owned and run by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2014	Full	good
27/03/2014	Interim	good progress
12/09/2013	Full	good
27/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
20 (2001)	ensure each young person is provided with such individual support, as he may require as a result of any health care need; in particular young people have an appropriate and agreed plan for managing their epilepsy. (Regulation 20 (c))	19/03/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure visits carried out under Regulation 33 include a detailed summary

and analysis of the care practice in the home (NMS 21.7)

- ensure records are clear and up-to-date in particular records are reviewed within the specified timescales and the current documents are available on the young person's working file (NMS 22)
- Ensure investigation into any allegations or suspicions of harm are handled quickly, fairly and consistently in a way that provides effective protection for the young person and at the same time support the person who is the subject of the allegation. (NMS 20.8)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.