

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	04/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC037647
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Municipal Buildings, Cherryfield Drive, LIVERPOOL, L32 1TX

Responsible individual	Paul Boyce
Registered manager	James De Turberville
Inspector	Sharon Lloyd

Inspection date	04/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The home has made significant progress in meeting the requirements and recommendations for improvement made at the last inspection, in a short period of time. Consequently, the quality of care to children has improved. Two children have begun having overnight stays at the home since the last inspection. The pace of introductions is individually tailored to meet each child's needs and this enables a successful transition. Both newly admitted children have had long introductions, including weekly tea visits for six to twelve months, due to their high anxieties about being apart from their families. This has enabled them to build relationships with the staff team and get to know the routines of the home so they feel comfortable and at ease there. The home works collaboratively with parents and partner agencies to continually assess children's progress and ensure they stay overnight only when ready. Both newly admitted children have had successful overnight stays. A partner professional for one of the children, wrote to the home following the child's first overnight stay, saying: 'This is absolutely brilliant news! I am and I know others will be chuffed to bits. Huge well done to everyone involved, this is a massive achievement. I appreciate it wasn't all plain sailing but the fact it was managed and he stayed is fantastic.' The manager and deputy effectively lead the staff team though close supervision of their work and children's progress. The home continues to improve its task analysis documentation, with a clear focus on the small steps to supporting individual children to reach their own milestones. Steps are clearly set out and children's progress and achievements are recorded during each short stay. Key workers assess the child's progress over a series of visits and amend children's individual targets accordingly. This enables continuous assessment and review of children's experiences and progress. It supports staff to focus on providing each child with the help they need to develop their skills, manage their behaviour and become more independent. An example of this is a child learning to sleep alone in a bed. Staff have supported him appropriately so that he feels safe and secure enough to do so.	

The home has acquired and set up a new computer for children's use. It has a specialist keyboard and mouse for those that need it. This is a popular resource, which children enjoy.

Staff have engaged in a training event focusing on effective communication with children who have autism, using signing and picture symbols as well as simple, spoken language. Two parents delivered this highly successful training, in partnership with the home's managers. Staff recognise the value of using alternative communication methods to help children express their views and feelings and are developing their skills and resources further, as they embrace this method of working. This is helping children to understand and be understood, more easily.

The home is further developing its relationship with the positive behaviour support team. Support workers who work closely with the child and family, spend time in the home, modelling good behaviour management strategies with individual children. This is proving to be extremely successful in helping staff to manage children's challenging behaviour effectively.

The manager and staff team have high aspirations for children. The manager involves staff in growing the home's development plan so that staff buy into the changes and engage positively in developing better ways of working. A small cohort of staff have been enrolled on specialist training to help them support families to manage children's challenging behaviour so that, looking ahead, the home will be able to provide a better wrap-around service that is more focused on meeting the needs of each individual child and their family.

There have been no restraints since the last inspection. However, staff have received refresher training in how to manage restraints and complete the required documentation following a restraint. There have been no significant incidents and no children have gone missing. Concerns about poor practice are appropriately investigated and children's safety and well-being are well protected during any investigation.

The arrangements for fire drills have improved so that almost all children have participated in a fire drill at least once in the last 12 months. Most children have participated in many more. The home is working with children to raise their awareness of fire safety through following up fire drills with social stories.

The home has taken action to ensure that personnel files relating to agency staff are well kept and demonstrate the person's suitability, through checks and references.

The home continues to build on its work with partner agencies, including parents, health professionals, schools and social work teams. This promotes a consistent approach to supporting and communicating with children. Effective communication between professionals and parents helps parents to feel confident in the service. A

parent sent the manager a video clip of his child whooping for joy when his parents told him he was going to have an overnight stay at the home. This shows how much the child enjoys his short breaks.

The home is working positively with other similar homes in neighbouring authorities, to share good practice and learning. As a result of this collaboration, the home is reviewing elements of their service, for example, safety planning for children at risk of going missing, which will help to develop their services.

Information about this children's home

- The home is managed by the local authority. It provides short break care for up to four children with physical and / or learning disabilities. The home is known to children and families as 'the bungalow'.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2016	CH - Full	Good
30/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
24/10/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
25/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
none	

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 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 who 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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