

## Children's homes - interim inspection

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|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>03/02/2016</b>                                                         |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC037657</b>                                                           |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Interim</b>                                                            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's home</b>                                                    |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council</b>                              |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>Municipal Buildings,<br/>Cherryfield Drive, LIVERPOOL,<br/>L32 1TX</b> |

|                               |                     |
|-------------------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Paul Boyce</b>   |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Mark Ford</b>    |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Marina Tully</b> |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                | <b>03/02/2016</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>sustained effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>The home continues to provide a welcoming and stable home environment to young people who have previously experienced considerable instability and disruption in their lives.</p> <p>Staff are resilient, they understand and stick by young people and consistently support them through difficult times. This has been the longest and most stable placement for all young people living in this home.</p> <p>Young people continue to make positive progress from their starting points. A young person was enabled to sit her art GCSE exam two years early and she achieved a grade C. She is currently being supported to sit her photography GCSE exam one year earlier than expected. Her achievements are down to staff's constant encouragement, support and effective partnership working with her school.</p> <p>Staff take appropriate action to challenge barriers to learning. When school and college placements breakdown, staff work tirelessly with young people, parents, schools, and career advisors to address the issue. This effective partnership working is ensuring that plans are reviewed in accordance with changes in young people's need and circumstances. Education continues to be a high priority in this home.</p> <p>The home has established good links with a range of specialist health providers, including counselling and therapeutic support, smoking cessation clinics and drug and alcohol services. When needed, these services are called upon to provide support and guidance to both young people and the team. This is helping young people to improve their health and learn how to make healthier life choices. When young people refuse to accept this support, staff continue to try new ways to encourage them to engage. This has included arranging for appointments to take place at the home, which helps young people to overcome the stigma attached to certain health needs and services.</p> |                   |

A competent team help and protect young people. Incidents of missing from home and child sexual exploitation (CSE) have significantly decreased. This is down to effective partnership working with young people, their friends and family and other safeguarding professionals.

Missing from home records have vastly improved. Each incident is now clearly recorded which supports effective monitoring and evaluation of staff's safeguarding practice. Furthermore, through effective and constant challenge, missing from home return interviews are now being completed. The authority commissions an independent specialist missing and CSE team to visit young people following each missing episode. This provides young people with the opportunity to speak to a trusted adult about the reasons why they went missing. Additionally, it helps the home to review their care plans and prevent further incidents.

Young people are sensitively supported to maintain contact with their families and friends. Some young people are benefitting from increased contact with their family, including fortnightly sleepovers with their older siblings and weekends with friends. This enables young people to maintain appropriate attachments with people who are important to them. Furthermore, it is helping to decrease incidents of missing because young people are having their contact increased in a safe and planned way.

Staff and young people enjoy activities together, such as short breaks away to Blackpool and Wales. Each young person has a membership to the local gym that they can use at their own leisure. These opportunities are helping young people to develop positive relationships with staff and each other.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of young people's starting points. Furthermore, they have realistic expectations of what young people can achieve. This is reflected in staff's approach to preparing young people for independent living. They fully appreciate the challenges of independent living, in particular, young people not recognising risk or knowing how to stay safe. Preparation for this transition, therefore, starts with staff teaching young people to recognise their own vulnerabilities and developing their emotional resilience.

The home continues to be effectively managed by an experienced and committed Registered Manager. All but one of the actions raised at the last inspection have been effectively addressed. Some errors in staff's recordings are not being picked up in the manager's monitoring. Despite assessments and plans being regularly reviewed by staff, some records included out-of-date information. The manager acknowledges that he has not spent sufficient time focusing on this task. He puts it down to other work commitments, outside of the home, impeding on his time. He has raised this matter with his manager and shows commitment to putting this right.

## Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural needs.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 07/07/2015      | Full            | Good                    |
| 11/02/2015      | Interim         | sustained effectiveness |
| 08/10/2014      | Full            | Good                    |
| 10/02/2014      | Interim         | Satisfactory 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   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must-</p> <p>(2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. With particular regard to monitoring young people's records.</p> | 03/02/2016 |

### Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all incidents of control and discipline are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and its effectiveness is evaluated. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, paragraph 9.36, page 46)
- Ensure that those with a leadership and management role should be able to deliver their leadership and management responsibilities fully. This is particularly in relation to providing effective monitoring of the home's records. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, paragraph 10.7, page 52)

## **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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