

Children's home – Interim inspection

Inspection date	07/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC037657
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered provider address	Municipal Buildings Huyton Knowsley Merseyside L36 5YH

Responsible individual	Ruth France
Registered manager	Mark Ford
Inspector	Marina Tully

Inspection date	07/02/2017
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 last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. Young people are still not benefiting from robust and effective education plans, particularly when they are excluded from or refusing to attend school or college. When young people refuse to attend or engage in alternative education provision, such as home tuition, staff do not revise and amend young people's education plans or timetables. As a result, barriers to young people's learning, such as poor morning routines, are not being tackled effectively. Additionally, the home does not have adequate systems in place for monitoring young people's progress. This is particularly evident in the monitoring of young people's home tuition. Although staff communicate daily with the home tutor, updates on young people's progress are not routinely sought to inform planning. Consequently, staff are not targeting their support in the required areas, such as mathematics. The home tutor identified specific homework tasks to the inspector, which included staff practising times tables with young people. However, this information had not been shared with staff and was not therefore incorporated into young people's plans. Therefore, young people are not being sufficiently supported to reach their full educational potential, which, in turn, hinders their future employment opportunities. Staff teach young people how to undertake practical tasks, including shopping, cooking and budgeting and some young people are undertaking Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network awards, which supports their journey to adulthood. However, young people's progress and specific areas for development are not reflected in their independence plans. Consequently, young people are not getting support with their specific needs, such as learning to take responsibility for administering their own medication safely. Staff continue to follow robust risk assessments and this is helping to keep young people safe. For most young people, incidents of going missing are reducing. When young people do go missing, staff act quickly and report them to the police. The registered manager recognises the challenges of managing risk without restricting liberty. He identified this as an area that requires further consideration, particularly for some young people living in the home.	

Partnership working with safeguarding professionals, including the police and specialist missing from home teams is enhancing young people's safety. The home keeps young people's social workers updated on all safeguarding concerns, which ensures that young people's vulnerabilities are wholly reflected in their care plans.

Placement stability and consistency in staff continue to be key strengths of this home. Since the last inspection, all three young people have remained living in the home. They benefit from the care and support provided by a consistent staff team which understands their needs and interests well. Consequently, young people have developed positive relationships with the staff, who they are confident to approach should they have any worries or concerns.

Two requirements and one recommendation raised at the previous inspection have been repeated. The manager's monitoring is not identifying shortfalls in care planning and, in particular, young people's education plans. Ofsted is still not being provided with updates on all child protection matters. Consequently, the home's regulator is prevented from evaluating all serious safeguarding concerns that arise in the home. There are still some gaps in staff's mandatory training, such as medication administration and fire safety. This is not ensuring that staff have the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their roles safely.

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/11/2016	Full	Good
03/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/07/2015	Full	Good
11/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard, the registered person must ensure: (1) that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. (2)(a)(i) in particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans.	10/03/2017
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	10/03/2017
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if a child protection enquiry involving a child is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry). (Regulation 40 (4)(d)(i)(ii))	10/03/2017

Recommendation

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11). This is with particular regard to all staff refreshing their mandatory training within the given timescales.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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