

Inspection report for children's home

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC037657        |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Marina Tully    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Interim         |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Registered person</b>         | Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council                                                            |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council,<br>Education Offices Huyton Hey Road LIVERPOOL<br>L36 5YH |
| <b>Responsible individual</b>    | Paul Boyce                                                                                       |
| <b>Registered manager</b>        | Mark Ford                                                                                        |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b>   | 08/10/2014                                                                                       |

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b> | 11/02/2015 |
|------------------------|------------|

|                                          |      |
|------------------------------------------|------|
| 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**.

Young people continue to achieve in all areas of their welfare and development. All young people are in full time education or attending vocational training courses. Attendance at school has significantly improved for some young people. This is down to effective collaborative working between staff, young people, schools and placing social workers. Consequently, young people who previously refused to attend school now attend full time. Young people's attitude to learning is therefore improving and they are starting to take appropriate steps to secure future employment.

Young people's health and emotional well-being is promoted through staff's encouragement and determination. As well as attending all routine health checks, young people are linked in with the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS), to address their emotional welfare. Those who receive this service benefit from developing safer coping strategies and improved emotional resilience. However, a challenge for young people is the delay in getting their initial appointment through, this can take up to 8 weeks. Young people feel that this is too long and this delay then impacts on their willingness to engage. Staff tackle this by supporting young people through regular key work sessions and constant encouragement to attend appointments once they come through.

Young people's health is further promoted through detailed health plans which give staff clear guidance on how to address specific medical needs. However, the recording and storage of some medication is not sufficiently robust to prevent potential errors. This is because some medication is not stored in line with pharmaceutical guidance and records do not confirm that medication is regularly audited.

Young people profit from comprehensive and updated care plans and risk assessments. This ensures that their daily care needs are being consistently met.

The home ensures that their own plans and risk assessments reflect the individuality of young people, and the placing authorities' objectives. The home does not complete detailed impact risk assessments prior to accepting new placements. This has led to some inappropriate emergency placements being made. Consequently, some young people have been exposed to potential risks due to incompatible placements.

Young people's risk taking behaviour is managed well by staff. When young people go missing, staff make concerted efforts to keep in touch with them and encourage their safe return home. When necessary, more concerning incidents of missing are escalated to multi-agency strategy meetings. This ensures that young people's risks and vulnerabilities are being addressed by all responsible parties and safety is enhanced through effective partnership working. Over recent months, incidents of missing from home have decreased. This is because staff, social workers and the police have taken effective measures, such as issuing harbouring notices, to prevent further incidents.

Staff work to clear behaviour plans which guide them on how to avoid and manage challenging situations. As a result, the use of physical intervention is extremely rare and behaviour within the home is, on the whole, positive. On occasion, staff continue to use inappropriate and ineffective behaviour strategies. For example, they withhold pocket money to get young people to undertake household chores. Furthermore, records show that staff do not consistently evaluate the effectiveness of the measures they use. Young people therefore continue with certain unwanted behaviours as they are not learning to reflect and link their actions with effective consequences.

Young people moving on to other services benefit from good planning, timely introductions and quality partnership working with the new placement. This ensures continuity in care and a smooth transition, all of which helps the young person settle into their new home.

The home continues to be effectively managed by a committed leader. The manager is enthusiastic about developing the service in line with young people's needs, wishes and feelings. The manager and staff make good efforts to seek the views of young people, parents and placing social workers, this is demonstrated in the service monitoring reports. Regular house meetings provide the opportunity for young people to have their say in the running of the home. Records demonstrate that young people feel confident to make requests and their wishes and views are taken seriously. For example, young people have chosen new bedroom furniture and suggested forthcoming trips and holidays abroad, which the manager is looking into.

All but one recommendation from the previous inspection have been effectively addressed. Staff training in first aid and e-safety remains outstanding. This is due to take place over the next 6 weeks. Young people's participation and engagement has improved and they are clearly given opportunities to contribute to the monitoring

and development of the home. Additionally, the young person's guide is up-to-date and now provides an accurate picture of the service and details of agencies who offer independent support.

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by the local authority.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement  |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 08/10/2014      | Full            | good                  |
| 10/02/2014      | Interim         | satisfactory progress |
| 13/06/2013      | Full            | good                  |
| 07/01/2013      | Interim         | satisfactory 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   |
|--------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 11<br>(2001) | ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there. This is specifically in relation to completing detailed written impact risk assessments prior to any child's admission to the home (Regulation 11 (1)(a)) | 02/03/2015 |
| 17<br>(2001) | ensure not to use as a disciplinary measure the imposition of any financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation. This is specifically in relation to withholding children's pocket money. (Regulation 17 (3)(g))              | 02/03/2015 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children. Specifically in relation to staff evaluating the effectiveness of sanctions and young people being helped to reflect on the measures used (NMS 3.6)
- ensure medicines which are kept in the home are stored safely and are accessible only by those for whom they are intended. Specifically in relation to the storage of controlled medication in line with pharmaceutical guidance and routine auditing of medication stock (NMS 6.13)
- ensure staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and purpose of the setting. Specifically in relation to first aid and E-safety training. (NMS 18.1)

## **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.