

SC037657

Registered provider: Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and accommodation for three children and young people who are unable to live with their families.

The registered manager has been registered since March 2017. However, the registered manager has been working away from the home since January 2018, and is due to return on 1 May 2018. An acting manager has been in charge of the home in his absence.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 April 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2017	Full	Good
07/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
24/11/2016	Full	Good
03/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendation

- Ensure that records of direct work with children are detailed, analytical and reflective, and that they represent a significant contribution to understanding children's needs, experiences and outcomes ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5). In particular, each record should show clearly the outcome that the work is trying to achieve: how it fits in with the child's plan; the child's views, wishes and feelings; an evaluation of the effectiveness of the work; and set out what needs to happen next to support the child.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children live in a calm, nurturing and supportive home. They feel at home and helped to design the refurbishment of the house. It is now a pleasant, homely and comfortable place to live.

Staff are friendly and are very good at developing positive relationships with children. They take time to get to know children and find out what is important to them. They make sure that children receive a high quality of care that is tailored to their personal needs and aspirations. The staff help children to have fun and take part in things that they enjoy, such as horse riding, art and spending time with their friends.

Staff listen to children's views, wishes and worries, and respond to them appropriately. Children are involved in making choices about their lives, including the running of their home, their health and education and the plans for their future. Children take up issues about their care and make complaints with the support of an independent advocate.

Staff work well as part of the wider support network to plan for children's care. Their strong working relationships with parents, social workers, independent reviewing officers, teachers and health workers make sure that children get the best possible support that continues to meet their needs.

Children's care is well planned. The managers make sure that staff have the right skills and experience to respond effectively to children's needs. They consider carefully how new children's needs match with the needs of other children living there. Children get the chance to visit in order to meet staff and other children before they move in. They are fully involved in their moves to the home and always get a warm welcome.

Staff work exceptionally well with members of children's families so that they can play an

important part in their children's lives. They encourage and support children to see their parents, brothers and sisters. The staff make sure that this is a safe and positive experience for the children that helps them to maintain meaningful relationships and get on better with their families.

Children get the right support and encouragement from staff to take part in education and do well. Staff help them to study and provide extra help when children need it, such as support in revising for their GCSEs. Staff keep a close eye on children's progress at school. They work closely with teachers and the local authority to make sure that children get the right help to support their learning and development.

Children receive good advice, support and services that help them to be healthy and encourage emotional well-being. Staff help children to have a good understanding of healthy lifestyles, and help them to improve their self-esteem and well-being.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children live in a safe home. The strong and supportive safeguarding arrangements help children feel safe and protect them from harm. Staff help children to have a better understanding of risk and healthy relationships. Children know how to keep themselves and other children safe. They ask for the staff's help when they are worried.

Staff recognise the signs of abuse and exploitation. They take decisive action when they have concerns about children's safety, such as when a child is often going missing from home or when they notice changes in a child's mood or behaviour.

Managers and staff report their concerns appropriately and quickly to the safeguarding agencies. They work effectively as part of a well-established safeguarding network which includes children's families. Together they share information, identify and understand the risk and devise appropriate and effective plans. This has reduced the risk of harm to children. They make sure that children get the right support to help them to be safe.

Managers and staff are making good use of opportunities to look at serious situations when children have shown aggressive and dangerous behaviour, so that they can improve the ways in which they support children. Regular development and training days are helping staff to develop their understanding of children's behaviour, the impact of insecure attachments and trauma on children, and the best ways of helping children when they are having a difficult time.

The staff have also been able to reflect on their practice in response to children's behaviour. Staff use this knowledge effectively. They work positively with children to help them manage their feelings and control their behaviour when they are upset. The staff's excellent approach is based on building nurturing, trusting and reliable relationships with children, and calmly helping children to manage their feelings and frustrations safely.

Staff actively involve children in finding solutions to problems. Staff and children have worked together successfully to agree on the consequences if children use their telephones late at night. As a result, children are more settled and getting a good night's sleep.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Senior managers put in place suitable arrangements for the management of the home during the registered manager's absence. The acting manager is highly experienced and appropriately qualified. He is providing clear, consistent and effective leadership.

Managers and staff are committed to giving children a safe, nurturing and stable home where they get the help they need. They are ambitious for children and want them to do well. They help them to enjoy positive experiences, feel safe and be happy, and reach their potential.

Effective staffing arrangements ensure that there are always enough knowledgeable, experienced and qualified staff available to meet children needs. The staff work together cohesively and the day-to-day care of children is well planned, to provide them with the best possible support.

Leaders and managers provide each member of staff with excellent support, guidance and encouragement. Staff have regular opportunities, through practice-related supervision and team meetings, to reflect on children's progress and ways of improving the support they give children, develop their skills and knowledge and to understand the emotional impact of the work.

Leaders and managers use thorough and evaluative monitoring systems to understand the quality of care that children receive. They take effective action to make necessary improvements that benefit children. This action has included a comprehensive refurbishment of the house, taking action to prevent any unnecessary delays in resolving children's complaints, and investing in developing the staff's knowledge, understanding and skills in the best ways of supporting children.

Records of direct work with children do not always provide enough detail and analysis to make a significant contribution to understanding a child's life. They do not clearly show what is going well, what staff and the child are worried about, the child's understanding of the issues, and what needs to happen next to help the child and sort out the problem.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care

provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC037657

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Knowsley MBC, Children's Services, Huyton Municipal Buildings, 6th Floor, Huyton, Knowsley, Merseyside L36 9YU

Responsible individual: Ruth France

Registered manager: James De Turberville

Inspector

Nick Veysey: social care inspector

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