

# 1242116

Registered provider: Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Interim 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 up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since March 2019. He is the registered manager for another children's residential service within the same local authority.

**Inspection date:** 3 December 2019

**Judgement at last inspection:** good

**Date of last inspection:** 7 May 2019

**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 the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

Significant shortfalls in safeguarding practice, behaviour management, positive relationships, healthcare and leadership and management are compromising young people's welfare, safety and progress.

Young people's health and well-being are not being consistently promoted. Staff are unable to encourage young people to engage with all relevant services, such as drug misuse and alcohol services. As a result, young people continue to misuse drugs and they are not getting the support that they need to address this.

Staff do not always ensure that young people attend important medical appointments. For example, there was little evidence of staff acting when a young person refused to attend a hospital appointment to review a broken bone in his hand.

Poor routines and unhealthy lifestyles are having a negative impact on the young people's education, health and future. The two young people living at the home are not engaged in any form of education, training or employment. Despite a recommendation being raised at the last inspection, there has been limited progress in this area.

Risk assessments do not accurately reflect young people's current needs or provide staff with clear guidance on how to manage risk and reduce harm. For example, risk assessments fail to identify protective strategies when young people are under the influence of substances. As a result, young people have been left unchecked when staff have suspected them to be under the influence of drugs.

The registered manager and staff do not take robust action to tackle potential child criminal exploitation. Although staff record and report incidents to the young person's social worker, they are unclear about their responsibility to escalate concerns to the relevant child exploitation team, which undermines joint working between all relevant safeguarding professionals.

The strategies for managing young people's behaviour are variable and ineffective. Staff's inconsistent practice is undermining the team's ability to establish respectful and trusting relationships with young people. Consequently, staff struggle to de-escalate young people's unsafe behaviour. There have been several incidents where young people have verbally and physically assaulted staff. On occasions, the staff have felt it necessary to call for police assistance to help manage incidents at the home.

Despite the staff team being suitably qualified and experienced, some staff lack the necessary skills and aptitude to establish and sustain positive relationships with young people. As a result, young people frequently refuse to engage with staff and decline their guidance and support, therefore their needs are not being adequately met.

The registered manager's oversight of the care provided in the home is weak. Although he is aware of young people's lack of progress, he has not taken swift or decisive action to address this. Consequently, young people are not yet receiving a high standard of care and support.

The two requirements raised at the last inspection in relation to notifying Ofsted of serious incidents and providing a copy of the quality of care review report have been repeated.

Positively, leaders acknowledge the shortfalls of the service and they have started to take steps to make the necessary improvements, for example putting new referrals and admissions to the home on hold until the current young people move on.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/05/2019	Full	Good
12/09/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
23/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/06/2017	Full	Good

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
<p>The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(x))</p>	20/01/2020
<p>*</p> <p>The health and well-being standard is that the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. (Regulation 10(1)(2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	20/01/2020
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust; an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and positive responses to other children and adults. (Regulation 11(1))</p>	20/01/2020
<p>*</p> <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the</p>	20/01/2020

<p>registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child’s welfare; and</p> <p>that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(vi)(b))</p>	
<p>*</p> <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home’s statement of purpose;</p> <p>ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate;</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(f))</p>	20/01/2020
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(b))</p>	20/01/2020
<p>The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45(4)(a))</p>	20/01/2020

\* These requirements are subject to a compliance notice.

## 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.

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.

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:** 1242116

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

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

**Responsible individual:** Ruth France

**Registered manager:** Martyn Swindell

## **Inspector**

Marina Tully, social care inspector

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