



Knowsley Council

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Validation Proforma for Children's Homes

1. Home and Location Assessment (Planning Applications Only)

Requirement	Response
a. Evidence of need for Children's Care Home in the Area this must include liaison with Knowsley Council Children's Services	We have proactively consulted with Daniel Arnold, the Commissioning and Contracts Officer within Knowsley Council Children's Services. He has confirmed that the local authority will support and provide feedback on our planning application for this property. Although there is a recognised surplus of standard, multi-bed residential homes across the region, a clear demand persists for highly specialised, single-occupancy step-down environments. We are committed to collaborating with the Council to deliver an effective transition and step-down framework as soon as our first placement is operational.
b. Evidence that the proposed Children's Care Home location and format aligns with the type of accommodation needed by Knowsley.	This service model is explicitly designed to meet Knowsley Council's criteria for solo placements and transitional step-down care. The property is ideally positioned within a well-connected residential neighbourhood, offering the resident easy access to essential local services, educational institutions, and healthcare networks. The setup, a dedicated 2-bedroom property supporting one child, allows for highly personalised care plans, structured daily routines, and intensive therapeutic support to ensure stability and reduce the likelihood of placement breakdown.
c. A justification and explanation as to the appropriateness of the premises. To include the identification of hazards and control to be put in place including the local and wider environment. This must include liaison with Merseyside Police regarding County Lines, missing persons, general hazards and exploitation.	The property 31 Clare Walk provides an ideal environment for a solo children's home. The layout consists of a suitable 2-bedroom property, offering one dedicated bedroom for the child and the second bedroom for the care staff on duty. The property features communal living spaces and a quiet area for learning and development. Domestic hazards are managed via rigorous health and safety

	installations, including non-slip flooring, hardwired smoke detection systems, secure storage units, and thorough risk management protocols. To address wider environmental safety, we will contact safer.knowsley@knowsley.gov.uk to identify regional risks such as County Lines, child exploitation, and missing person management.
d. Identified hazards and controls to be put in place including but not limited to: i. Risks of injury within the home including access to roof ii. Traffic, Railway, Waterways, Risks of Child Sexual Exploitation, Risk of Gangs, Crime, Anti-social Behaviour, Risks of Missing from Care, Risk of Substance Abuse, Drug Involvement. iii. Please include agencies who you have consulted as part of the risk assessment.	The property will be subject to ongoing risk assessments and full statutory fire and health safety compliance. Window restrictors will be fitted. All medications, sharp objects, and domestic chemicals will be secured in staff-controlled locked cupboards. Staff receive mandatory training in first aid, safeguarding, and behaviour management, ensuring an active supervisory presence 24/7. Situated in a quiet residential street, local traffic speeds are minimal. Staff will deliver ongoing road safety awareness and pedestrian skills training. Exploitation & Community Safety: Staff are comprehensively trained to spot early signs of grooming, criminal exploitation, or local gang association. A risk assessment will be created for each child. The home will enforce a strict zero-tolerance stance on illegal substances and alcohol. If a young person breaches their curfew or leaves without permission, our missing-from-care procedure is instantly activated, coordinating directly with Merseyside Police and local safeguarding teams. Risk planning and safeguarding will involve ongoing collaboration with Knowsley

	Council Children's Services, Merseyside Police, the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP), and Ofsted.
d. That the premises is located in a suitable and sustainable location; This must include an assessment of accessibility, local amenities and social infrastructure	The property at 31 Clare Walk, Fazakerley is situated in an established, community-focused residential area perfectly suited to a small-scale care environment. The location features exceptional transport links, with local bus routes and rail connections nearby providing straightforward travel across the wider Liverpool area. Essential community infrastructure, including local retail outlets, medical facilities, libraries, and leisure provisions, is entirely accessible. A diverse range of local primary schools, secondary schools, and further education options ensures the child's learning pathway can be fully accommodated within the immediate area.
e. That it provides suitable access and parking provision to accommodate activity associated with the premises.	The property features an established car park located at the back of the building with space for a car, alongside a private garage. Because this home will only ever accommodate one child, operational traffic is remarkably low and mirrors that of an ordinary residential household. The combination of the rear car park and on street parking, preventing any negative impact on local road users or immediate neighbours.

2. Management Plan (Planning Applications and Lawful Development Certificates)

Requirement	Response
a. The name of the company proposing to operate the facility and background.	Safe Hands Liverpool

b. Whether the home will be registered with ofsted and any evidence of communication with ofsted relevant to this home?	We will ensure this home is fully registered with Ofsted prior to welcoming our first resident. We have already initiated contact with Ofsted regarding our intent to register. A formal, comprehensive registration application will be submitted immediately following planning approval. No care operations will commence until the Ofsted registration process is fully finalised.
c. i. Type of provision (e.g. crisis, short or long term) and statement of purpose c. ii. Type of registration (emotional and behavioural difficulties, mental disorders, sensory, present alcohol problems, present drug problems, learning difficulty, physical disabilities)	Statement of Purpose attached. Registration will be sought under the following Ofsted criteria: • Children with emotional or behavioural difficulties (EBD) • Children with learning disabilities • Children with mental disorders (excluding distinct learning disabilities) • Children with sensory impairments
d. How many children would be accommodated and the age range (lower and upper limit)?	The home is strictly dedicated to one child at any time, catering to a developmental age range between 4 and 18 years old.
e. What will happen if any children reach 18? Will they remain?	The facility operates exclusively as a children's residential service for individuals under 18 years of age. Well in advance of a young person's 18th birthday, we will engage in pathway planning with the placing local authority to ensure a seamless transition into independent living or adult social care provisions. No adults will remain resident at the property.
f. What is the ratio of staff to children that is required i.e. delivery model?	The home operates on a bespoke delivery model, typically ranging from a 1:1 to a 2:1 staff-to-child ratio. The exact staffing level is assessed and determined by the individual needs, care plan, and risk profile of the child in residence, ensuring optimal support and safety at all times.

g. What is the likely level of need of the children accommodated i.e. is there a focus on complex needs? Will the home have a particular specialism?	The home accommodates children within our registered Ofsted categories, focusing specifically on children transitioning via a step-down framework who require a highly structured, single-occupancy therapeutic setting.
h. What is the likely shift pattern of staff i.e. how many staff (management and care staff) would likely be at the premises at any one time and when would shift changes occur? A staff Rota should be provided.	Care is delivered via a continuous 24-hour rotation designed to ensure seamless handovers. While the exact times remain subject to operational review, the proposed shift patterns are typically scheduled around an 08:00 to 14:00 daytime shift, a 14:00 to 20:00 afternoon/evening shift, and an 20:00 to 08:00 night shift (utilising a combination of waking and sleep-in staff as required by the child's care plan). The Registered Manager works standard business hours (09:00 to 17:00, Monday through Friday) to provide regular management oversight on-site.
i. What support officers would be likely to visit the property?	Regular professional visitors linked to the child's statutory care framework will include allocated Local Authority Social Workers, Independent Reviewing Officers (IROs), Regulation 44 Independent Visitors, health professionals/CAMHS practitioners, educational tutors, and Ofsted inspectors
j. How would visits be scheduled and would staff/support-workers meetings take place at the property?	All professional visits are pre-arranged and meticulously scheduled to prevent disruption to the child's home life. Small-scale care planning or multi-agency reviews may occasionally occur quietly within the home's office space.
k. Is the intention that the children cared for at the property will be home schooled or will they attend local schools? If children will be home schooled, will additional teachers/tutors attend the premises and how often.	The primary expectation is for the young person to attend established educational settings or specialist local schools within the community. Should a temporary period of home tuition be legally required, verified tutors will visit the property on a tightly structured daytime schedule.
l. Would therapeutic care be offered on-site?	Yes. If mandated by the individual's care pathway, certified clinical therapists or counsellors will visit the property to deliver

	private, one-to-one sessions in a comfortable, familiar environment.
m. Would case reviews taken place on or off-site?	Large-scale Looked After Child (LAC) reviews are generally hosted off-site at local authority offices or educational centres. Minor, day-to-day internal care reviews or key-worker sessions are held quietly on-site.
n. Are children ever left alone unsupervised at the property?	No. The property is staffed continuously 24 hours a day, and the child will never be left unsupervised on the premises.
o. Under what circumstances are children allowed to leave the property?	Leaving the home to attend education, social activities, or family contact is permitted strictly in line with their care plan and an organised risk assessment that reflects their age and independence skills.
p. Would staff members be informed/aware if a child left the property?	Yes. No departure from the property occurs without the full awareness, evaluation, and logging by the care team on duty.
q. Is there a curfew?	Yes. A structured curfew will be established, tailored specifically to the child's developmental age, care plan, and placement risk assessment to reinforce safe boundaries.
r. What would happen in the event of a breach of the curfew?	If a curfew is missed, staff immediately attempt direct contact. If the child cannot be reached or safety concerns arise, missing person protocols are activated, involving immediate notification to the on-call manager and Merseyside Police. Upon return, a thorough welfare check and a supportive return-home discussion are conducted.
s. What security provisions are proposed e.g. security and access controls on doors?	External doors will have staff-controlled secure lock systems designed to prevent unauthorised entry while ensuring immediate keyless access in the event of an emergency. Window restrictors and standard visitor logs are utilised to keep the property safe while strictly preserving a domestic, warm, non-institutional atmosphere.

t. Would CCTV be installed?	There are no initial plans to install CCTV systems. However, if requested by the local authority or social care partners as a necessary step-down safety measure, this option will be carefully evaluated.
u. How would local residents know how to raise a concern in the event of an issue?	Immediate neighbours will be provided with direct telephone numbers and email addresses for the home's management team. An introductory letter can also be distributed when the service opens to foster transparent, supportive community relations.
v. How long is each placement within the children's care home?	The length of stay is highly variable and depends entirely on the requirements of the organising local authority and the child's individual step-down plan.
w. Would any rooms be used as a dedicated meeting, training or therapy room?	A private staff office is set up on-site to handle necessary administrative tasks, shift handovers, and minor meetings. One of the rooms can be temporarily designated as a quiet space for therapy sessions when clinical visitors are on-site.
x. Would the parents or family of the children visit the home and, if so, how often is this likely to take place?	Family contact is supported entirely in accordance with the placing authority's care plan. Visits will be pre-planned and can occur at the property or in community settings depending on what best supports the young person's stability.
y. What dedicated parking provision (if any) exists for the dwelling and how is it intended to control vehicle movements and parking associated with the use arising from staff and other visitors?	The property benefits from a dedicated car park at the back with space for a car, alongside a private garage. Because staff shifts are structured to avoid peak-hour street congestion and overall vehicle numbers remain low, this off-street provision is entirely sufficient to absorb all operational vehicle movements without causing any disruption to the local street or neighbours.