

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034686
Inspector	Bill Drumm
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Durham County Council
Registered person address	County Hall DURHAM DH1 5UL

Responsible individual	Karen Monica Robb
Registered manager	Mark James Proffitt
Date of last inspection	05/01/2015

Inspection date	25/03/2015
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 **improved effectiveness**.

At the last inspection in January 2015, the overall effectiveness rating of the home was good. Two recommendations were made at that inspection and both have been fully met. The home has improved effectiveness since the last inspection.

All young people have continued to make progress. The attendance of some young people at school has in the past been infrequent. The home's manager, staff and senior managers within the local authority have taken a proactive approach in encouraging their attendance. Regular meetings take place between staff at the home and head teachers. The purpose of these meetings is to look at different strategies that can be used to ensure the regular attendance and good behaviour of young people within the school setting. This approach has been successful in maintaining young people's attendance at school and in ensuring a consistent approach to managing their behaviour is achieved. Other young people regularly attend college or training courses. They have developed friendship groups with young people who are not in the looked after system and their confidence and self-esteem has improved. All have career aspirations for the future and to seek full-time employment.

The first recommendation was to ensure each child's placement plan is monitored by a key-worker. They must ensure that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child. The Registered Manager has, through staff meetings and individual supervision sessions, reiterated with staff the importance of undertaking key-worker sessions with young people. All young people now have regular key-worker sessions, the content of which is fully recorded. Staff spoken to during the inspection said that young people were engaging more with staff and are happy to discuss their anxieties and concerns. They went on to say that young people have also become more involved in discussions relating to their risk assessments. Young people have developed an understanding of the hazards they

face and how to keep themselves safe.

The second recommendation was to contribute to the development of each child's care plan, including the pathway plan for eligible care leavers, and for staff to work collaboratively with the young person's social worker or personal adviser in implementing the plan. Each young person who is old enough and eligible has a pathway plan in place. Staff and young people have been fully involved in helping to identify what the individual needs of each young person are in relation to moving into independence and adulthood, and how those needs will be met. Pathway plans support this process and help to ensure young people are supported into adulthood.

The home has also made progress in a number of other areas. The negative behaviour of some young people has been managed effectively by staff. They use their personal knowledge of the young person and their skills in diverting them toward more positive actions. This has resulted in there being no restraints being used, no young people going missing and no notifications to Ofsted since the last inspection.

Staff have also been proactive in encouraging young people to participate in consultation events and teenagers to work schemes. This has helped young people to find work experience placements in local garages, care settings for older people and a local cafe. Staff and young people are also planning to raise money for charity by cycling from coast to coast. This is a distance of over 150 miles and something for which they should be commended.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to 5 young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is provided by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2015	Full	good
06/03/2014	Interim	good progress
29/10/2013	Full	good
15/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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.