

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035181
Inspector	Deborah White
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	Stephen Robinson
Date of last inspection	02/12/2014

Inspection date	10/03/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None since the last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Young people are progressing well as a direct result of attending for short-breaks at this children's home. All young people have progressed from their starting point, with outcomes ranging from good to very good. Young people are appropriately placed and their needs are met. They receive high quality care that is individualised. As a result, young people are flourishing.

Relationships with staff are caring and nurturing. Staff are skilled at quickly engaging children, which gains their trust. A young person said, 'It's okay here, the staff are very good.' Young people are consulted and listened to. This engages them in their care and empowers them to take an active part in making important decisions about their lives and future plans.

Educational outcomes are good. There are a number of examples where young people have attended the home for a short-break with a specific aim to get them back into school. This has proved very effective. Staff work very closely with schools to enable a smooth transition back into education. Where young people struggle to attend school they are provided with a wide range of creative options to entice them back into the classroom. These include vocational style educational programmes, planned phased school returns, and shared learning between the home and school. A staff member said, 'Education is very important, we work hard to get young people back into school.'

Where young people have specific or complex needs they have access to the services they need. A range of child and healthcare professionals are involved in young people's care planning to ensure they receive the best possible care. Staff have links to a comprehensive network of external support agencies, which young people can access quickly. This joint working gives young people optimal care and support.

Young people are safe, and where there are known risks there is a range of risk reducing strategies in place. Staff receive regular child protection training and know what to do if they are worried about a young person's welfare. This ensures young people's safety is taken seriously. Staff are vigilant in responding to instances where young people go missing that include: actively looking for young people; checking with family and friends to locate young people; and working with police to ensure a safe return. This promotes young people's welfare. A young person said, 'It's safe here.'

There have been three restraints since the last inspection, which were carried out for the right reasons and as a last resort. The recording of restraints is improved and meets a previous requirement. Entries now include a full description of how young people are restrained and why. This provides good information to allow for the robust monitoring of practice around the use of restraints.

Leadership and management are strong, which provides young people with a stable environment. The staff team are committed to their role and improving young people's lives. A staff member said, 'We have the best team, they work hard and put the young people first.' Monitoring in the home is good and has improved since the last inspection by meeting a requirement to fully consult with young people and their parents.

A previous requirement to provide HMCI with an updated Statement of Purpose is met. The Statement of Purpose clearly describes what the home sets out to do for young people. This provides social workers and parents with an informative picture of how the home operates.

There are no new requirements or recommendations arising from this inspection.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a local authority. The particular remit of the home is to provide time-limited short break care with the objective of returning young people to their families on a permanent basis.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/12/2014	Full	good
11/03/2014	Interim	good progress
14/11/2013	Full	good
24/01/2013	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.