Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	**04/08/2015**
Unique reference number	**SC035220**
Type of inspection	**Interim**
Provision subtype	**Children's home**
Registered person	**Durham County Council**
Registered person address	**County Hall, DURHAM, DH1 5UL**

Responsible individual	**Ms Karen Robb**
Registered manager	**Ms Joan Inns**
Inspector	**Ms White**

Inspection date	**04/08/2015**
Previous inspection judgement	**Improved Effectiveness**
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 this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Outcomes and experiences of children are very good. Individualised planning is exceptional and is informed by a comprehensive assessment of each child's needs and how these will be met. All staff have a superior knowledge of each child, which underpins highly skilled childcare practice.

All children are progressing and achieving, some beyond expectations. The staff team operate at a high level of professionalism that clearly impacts on outcomes.

Children are supported in a very nurturing environment. Relationships are inspiring and focus on promoting children's confidence and emotional security. This is particularly important as the home looks after younger children who have experienced a number of placements. A child said, 'I like it here, it's a good place and I like the staff.'

Transitions are a clear strength of the home. Early referrals enable the Registered Manager to engage with each child's care-support team, which includes attending multi-disciplinary care team meetings. This provides a full and thorough introduction to the child and a very good knowledge of each child's background and care history.

Bespoke introductions to the home are planned based on information gleamed from each child's social worker and the local authority therapeutic team. Specialist therapists provide ongoing support and advice to each child and the staff team. Planning for each child is meticulous and has resulted in very successful transitions into the children's home.

Inter-agency working is extremely effective and enhances children's life chances and their ability to move forward into a happy, health future. A staff member said, 'Working with the therapy team has a big influence in what we do. We can ring

them anytime and they are there to support us.'

Safety is seen as paramount. Children are safe and feel emotionally secure. This is a very important factor when working with younger children who have experienced past trauma. Behaviour is managed positively and is appropriate to each child's age and understanding. This creates a valuable environment for children to develop socially acceptable behaviour.

Leadership and management is strong. The Registered Manager is highly committed and leads a motivated, confident team. A staff member said, 'We are a strong team and work well together. This is a great place for children.' This generates a dynamic approach to putting children at the centre of the home's ethos and inspiring vision and values.

There are no previous requirements or recommendations from the previous inspection and no new ones arising from this visit.

Information about this children's home

The children's home is registered to care for three children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2015	CH - Interim	Improved Effectiveness
09/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
23/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
06/08/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who 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.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards.*

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