

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	11/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC035235
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 Robb
Registered manager	Bernadette Olney
Inspector	Debbie White

Inspection date	11/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The home have made very good progress by meeting the requirement and recommendations from the last inspection. This proactive approach to improving young people's outcomes is testament to very good leadership and management and a committed staff team. The statement of purpose has been updated to include information about the fitting of a new locking system on the front door of the home, which could potentially restrict young people's liberty. The new lock needs a fob-key to gain entry and to exit the home. The statement makes it clear that any restrictions will only be imposed where there is a clear risk to a young person should they leave the home unsupervised. Also, that such actions can only be used as a short-term measure and with the consent of a young person's placing authority. Two of the three young people accommodated have their own fob-key and can come and go as they please. They confirmed there are no restrictions to their movements and are happy with the arrangements. A third young person can gain entry to the home with his fob-key but there are some limitations to him leaving the home due to his vulnerability. There are full written consents where restrictions are in place and the young person's risk assessment fully justifies these measures. His care plan shows that his safety is potentially compromised and that he is having short, planned periods of unaccompanied time within the local community. He is being supported by staff to understand risks, such as road safety and stranger danger. He is responding positively to this structured introduction to being more independent. As a result, the young person is making positive progress while being kept safe. Recommendations to support missing young people and those moving into independent living are also met. Young people rarely go missing, but when they do they have access to an independent person upon their return. The registered manager fully reviews any circumstances where young people are missing or not where they are supposed to be to ascertain any potential triggers or patterns of	

risk-taking behaviours. Key workers fully engage all young people about the potential dangers of going missing and how to stay safe. Consequently, potential risks to young people are significantly reduced.

All young people are progressing and their outcomes are good. Relationships with staff are excellent and based on mutual respect. The home offers young people a safe, nurturing environment that meets their needs and promotes their overall well-being. Young people are confident, self-assured and feel wanted and cared about. A young person said, 'This is a good home and a good place to be, I wouldn't want to live anywhere else.' Another said, 'The staff are great, they take me out and they look after me.'

There is a strong emphasis on direct, one-to-one work with young people that provides highly individualised care and support. The registered manager and staff team strive to meet each young person's unique needs and see each young person's strengths and potential. Care practice is innovative and aspirational, which results in all young people achieving. Young people are fully involved in their care and how they are looked after. They are listened to and their views are acted upon and respected. This values and includes young people, which increases their chances of success. A young person said, 'The staff are there for you, and help you and don't give up.'

Good communication within the staff team and meaningful inter-agency partnership working ensures young people have access to the services they need. This well-organised, holistic approach enhances all aspects of young people's support and outcomes. A parent said, 'This is a very good home, and staff are very helpful and supportive. My son likes it here, has good relationships with staff, and gets all the help he needs. I feel very welcome and don't have any concerns. They do a great job.'

Monitoring and oversight of the home is effective and leads to continual improvement and development. Staff feel very valued and supported, which further motivates them to develop their skills, knowledge and experience. A staff member said, 'This is a great place to work. It's all about the young people. The team are great, we work well together. The manager is very supportive and we can talk about anything. We have the training we need, and always put young people first.'

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

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for 3 children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/12/2015	Full	Good
21/10/2014	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/08/2014	Full	Good
12/03/2014	Interim	Good progress

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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