

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	02/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC035247
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	Helen Andrews
Inspector	Colin Imrie

Inspection date	02/02/2016
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 sustained effectiveness. The home continues to be busy with increased numbers of children and young people being offered a short break service. As well as this, a number of the young people who have attended for many years are getting ready to move on to adult care services and these transitions are being planned now. The children and young people continue to be offered good care and they continue to enjoy the experiences offered by the service. They also continue to make good progress in gaining more independence, more confidence and more resilience in their lives. Before children and young people are offered a service the manager and staff do a thorough assessment and admissions are well planned. Equally, those young people who are moving on, do have their moves planned well. The registered manager puts a great deal of effort in to ensuring that appropriate adult services are planned and in place in good time for these moves. Care planning is strong with good clear individualised care planning. Every child and young person has clear goals and targets and their progress towards these is recorded. Staff are nurturing and offer good levels of support. Children and young people have the opportunity to take part in a range of activities in the home and outside in the community, as well as having the opportunity to make new friends. Children and young people have their short breaks planned around their friendship groups and this is very positive. One parent commented on how positive this was for their son. A previous requirement to increase the quality of key work with children and young people has been addressed and this area of the work is better. The manager does have ideas about further developing this work and these are positive and may well improve this aspect of the service further. Children and young people make good progress. Most of them have targets around becoming increasingly independent so that targets around personal hygiene and care, food preparation and becoming more confident around socialising are	

routinely set and achieved.

The staff working at this home continue to keep all the children and young people very safe. No children or young people have gone missing and no child protection concerns have arisen. Staff have only had to use one physical intervention and do not use sanctions. Very few accidents have happened and these have only been very minor. The home has good resources and is generally well maintained.

The manager continues to provide strong leadership. The staff team is settled and is skilled and experienced. The manager offers good supervision and support to staff. The team rally around to cover for absences so as to avoid the need for agency staff and therefore provide a consistent service to the children and young people.

The manager now has a number of ideas around developing the service and these are positive and likely to make the service more effective in the future. The manager continues to monitor the care of the children and young people well.

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority and is registered to provide short break care and accommodation for up to seven children with learning disabilities (LD)

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/10/2015	Full	Good
05/03/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
07/10/2014	Full	Good
23/12/2013	Interim	Good Progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Ensure that staff have appropriate resources to support their training needs around learning disabilities. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 53 paragraph 10.11)
- Ensure that staff understand that children using short break provision may need greater safeguards than other children. Specifically, that if children arrive with sores or other injuries then this information will need to be recorded accurately and fully. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 36 paragraph 7.20)

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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