

Children's home – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC035648
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered Provider	Durham County Council
Registered Provider address	County Hall Durham DH1 5UL

Responsible Individual	Carole Payne
Registered Manager	Selwyn Morgans
Inspector	Shaun Common

Inspection date	15/02/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness. At the last inspection of the home in September 2016, five statutory requirements and eight recommendations were made. Four of the recommendations related to the education provision and will be assessed at the next full inspection of the home. Of the six statutory requirements, three have been fully met. The home now has a policy that sets out how and when ligature cutters are to be checked and verified as fit for purpose. Practice-related supervision is provided for staff, although the quality of some recording was variable. Staff stated that there is ongoing training and professional development this was supported by recorded evidence. Regular reflective group supervision takes place that supports staff effectively and promotes effective practice. The anti-bullying policy is now fully implemented. Staff ensure that records of any incidents are fully completed and demonstrate impact for young people. Three statutory requirements have not been fully met, although some progress has been made. The section in sanction records for indicating the effectiveness of the measure is completed, though this sometimes lacks clarity about whether the measure is effective or not. The recording of the outcome of any complaint made by young people and the action taken has improved to some degree. There are still occasions where the action taken and the investigatory process are not recorded or clear. Records do not routinely show whether young people are satisfied with the outcome. Monitoring by managers has improved somewhat. Some records that evidenced shortfalls at the last inspection have now improved, although some shortfalls remain, indicating that monitoring still requires improvement. Of the four remaining recommendations, two have been fully met. The consistency of the minutes taken in community meetings has improved, and they evidence the responses by staff to young people. In one set of minutes where the record was below the expected standard, the manager had already identified this and assured that this matter would be addressed. Young people have free access to complaints forms. These are now placed in young people's rooms to use if they require them.	

Two recommendations have not been met. Managers still do not record the personal support offered or provided to staff following incidents of physical restraint, and a number of sanction records do not demonstrate that a restorative approach has been considered where appropriate.

On admission to the home, there are clear processes for developing detailed plans for each young person that set out how their needs will be met and how any concerns will be addressed. Staff know young people's needs well and work with relevant professionals and services to achieve good outcomes for young people.

There is concern over how one young person was recently admitted to the home, though it is noted that these arrangements were outside the home's control. Contractual arrangements with the Youth Justice Board indicate that the service is given 30 minutes to review all relevant information about a young person and to make a decision on whether their needs can be met at the home and whether to admit. This timescale for considering the needs of a young person and other young people in the home is not in all cases sufficient. In the case of this recent admission, there was considerable information to review. Furthermore, the young person arrived at the home in a cellular vehicle. The Youth Justice Board later confirmed to the manager that the young person was not transported in the back of the vehicle as is standard practice, but was in the front with the driver. The vehicle used and method of transport is not appropriate, as it does not promote young people's privacy and dignity. The manager has raised these concerns with the Youth Justice Board.

Young people are making good progress at the home. Planning for young people's transition and/or discharge is good. Plans are clear and robust and detail effective arrangements and support for young people. Staff work in partnership with relevant professionals and agencies to ensure that young people are well prepared for the next stage of their lives.

Complaints records were examined. Details are lacking in some cases to show the rigour of processes. With some complaints there is evidence of young people receiving feedback and it is recorded whether they are happy with the outcome. However, in some cases this is not routinely recorded. Overall, evidence indicates that this is a recording issue with limited impact upon young people.

The home has a policy and procedure to follow should any concerns of a child protection nature arise. Two recent incidents were examined and discussed in detail with managers. One incident was managed appropriately, in line with the home's procedures. There was a slight delay in referring the second matter to the local authority and/or seeking the local authority's advice. Young people were not at risk at any time, as managers had considered this situation carefully and put in place protective measures.

Physical restraint is used in line with regulations. The home keeps and maintains clear records of all incidents. However, debriefs with young people lack details

about what would help going forward, for example what triggered the incident and any influencing factors. Managers carry out very regular monitoring of all incidents to ensure that practice is appropriate, including through the use of closed-circuit television.

Overall, the level of monitoring by managers has remained similar to the last inspection. There are areas where monitoring is good and ensures that practices are appropriate. However, there are matters that are lacking that are not being identified and addressed, such as recording.

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 42 young people aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides care and accommodation for up to 18 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and 24 places for young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. The admission of any young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/09/2016	Full	Good
15/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
13/10/2015	Full	Good
27/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a sanction in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— (a) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(vii)) Specifically, ensure the effectiveness of the measure is accurately recorded.	30/04/2017
Ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))	30/04/2017
13: .—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on— (ii) feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; Specifically, evidence whether young people are satisfied with the outcome of any complaint.	30/04/2017
13.—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous	30/04/2017

improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. Specifically, ensure that monitoring systems are robust and identify and address shortfalls in records.	
12.—(1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. Specifically, ensure child protection procedures are followed and records kept that evidence that this is the case.	31/03/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- Records of restraint should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) Specifically, ensure that records of staff debriefings provide evidence of personal support offered and provided, and, that records of discussions with young people are more detailed to show the young person's views about the incident and what they think could help them going forward that will assist in developing their behaviour management plans.

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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