

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	15/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC035648
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Durham County Council
Registered person address	County Hall, DURHAM, DH1 5UL

Responsible individual	Carole Payne
Registered manager	Selwyn Morgans
Inspector	Paul Scott

Inspection date	15/03/2016
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. This continues to be a well-run centre where young people benefit from the individual care and support they receive from staff. Care planning and care practice is based on rigorous assessment, monitoring and review. These processes are further strengthened through cohesive and well utilised links with a range of professionals, including on-site nurses and mental health specialists. This multi-disciplinary 'team around the child' approach enables staff to take the right action to help young people and keep them safe through the use of well-thought out intervention and risk management strategies. The Registered Manager is extremely child-focused and has high aspirations for the future of the centre. He demonstrates a strong commitment to ensuring young people have positive experiences and opportunities during their stay. His child-centred philosophy has been welcomed and embraced by staff who are striking a good balance between caring for young people and maintaining control in a secure setting. Good training, in particular trauma training, continues to raise staff awareness of topics such as the impact of abuse, sexual exploitation and self-harm, developing their ability to work with young people well. Young people are mostly positive about their experiences with a number of them describing their time at the centre as life changing. At the last inspection the staff team had been reorganised to ensure that staff with the right skills were working directly with young people in the houses. Young people have benefitted from this change which is now fully embedded into practice. Although their care and welfare is the responsibility of everyone in the centre, they benefit from a core team that is primarily focused on understanding and meeting their individual needs in their house. Young people say they have positive relationships with the majority of staff whom they believe to be caring in their approach. One particularly complex young person said, 'I am really happy here. Staff are the best. They really care and make me feel safe.' Managers and staff have been extremely effective in their management of a number of challenges they have faced since the last inspection. For example, a	

number of doors have been replaced throughout the centre as well as a major redecoration and refurbishment programme. Young people have had to decant from one house to another in order to facilitate this work. This has at times caused a great deal of unsettlement and disruption throughout the centre. Also, recent issues with the centres power supply bought about a major challenge in maintaining young people's care, safety and security. To their credit, managers and staff have maintained a high level of support for young people ensuring the inherent risks were managed and young people's care was not compromised. The Youth Justice Board Monitor said, 'Given the challenges they have faced they have done really well. I have no concerns about the centre which continues to be given the highest rating for safety and security from us. The manager is very open, keeps us informed and addresses issues as they arise.'

The manager has a good understanding of the home strengths and demonstrates a strong commitment to a well-planned and informed improvement agenda. Future developments, including the restructuring of the management and staff team, are clearly outlined in a detailed service improvement action plan. These plans are reviewed weekly to ensure that the centre is on track.

All of the requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection have been addressed. Staff are clearly taking more responsibility for the centre and are routinely reporting and ensuring that damage is quickly repaired and that hazards are immediately removed, resulting in a much safer environment. Young people's records have been reorganised and although there continues to be a combination of electronic and written systems, these are much more synchronised and contain the relevant information. This includes detailed risk management and support plans that are routinely used to inform staff practice. Improvements have been made to missing from home records and sanction records. Processes for inducting new staff have been strengthened. This, combined with a more rigorous approach to formal supervision means that staff are well prepared for working in a secure setting and have the opportunity to formally reflect and develop their practice. Monitoring processes have also been improved. All managers are now completing action plans following the regulation 44 visits. These ensure that the shortfalls identified by the independent visitor are acknowledged and addressed in a timely manner.

There have been a number of safeguarding referrals and allegations since the last inspection. Robust management of these incidents has promoted young people's safety. Information has been shared with relevant agencies and professionals, including the local authority safeguarding team and Ofsted. There is a need to improve the quality of information that has been shared with Ofsted via the notifications process. This has been at times seriously lacking in detail which has made it difficult for the regulator to determine whether the action taken by staff is sufficiently robust to protect young people.

Young people's safety and security is given the highest priority. Search procedures have been thoroughly revised and improved following a small number of prohibited

items, including tobacco and mobile phones, being brought into the centre by young people and visitors.

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, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides care and accommodation for up to 24 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and 18 places for young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are 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
13/10/2015	SCH - Full	Good
27/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
17/09/2014	CH - Full	Good
28/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

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 with the given timescales.

Recommendations

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

- Regulation 40(4) requires the registered person to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)-(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious (40(4)(e)). The registered person should ensure that the quality of information contained within these notifications is of a consistently high standard and of sufficient detail to demonstrate that the right responses have been made to effectively and safely manage the incident. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 63, paragraph 14.10)

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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