

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC405285
Inspector	Colin Imrie
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	North East Autism Society
Registered person address	Units 15 & 16 Lumley Court Drum Industrial Estate; Birtley CHESTER LE STREET County Durham DH2 1AN
Responsible individual	John Joseph Phillipson
Registered manager	Julie Dunlop
Date of last inspection	29/08/2014

Inspection date	05/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The manager has made good efforts to ensure all the previous requirements and recommendations have been carried out well. The manager has made particularly good progress around ensuring all the staff are well trained and well supervised. This will all ensure the young people are better cared for.

The manager has also improved the quality of monitoring. The report prepared by the manager requires some changes to make it more readable. There are many charts and graphs which are printed in colour and which lose clarity when scanned making the information unreadable. The statement of purpose also requires updating and submitting to Ofsted. Two requirements have been made at this inspection to address these shortfalls. Assessments, placement plans and risk assessments are now all in place. All staff are now getting a full and timely induction and receiving appropriate training and regular supervision. There are no staff currently employed who are within four years of age of the young people in residence.

The young people are all making progress with social and life skills. One young person is making particularly good progress at school. Others are making progress with personal skills, such as dressing and eating. Young people are also making clear progress with social skills, such as controlling verbal outbursts. This progress will increase confidence and the ability to be independent. The mother of one young person said, 'They have changed his life around, they couldn't do better.'

Staff are ambitious for the young people. This means young people achieve well. One young person was supported to go to London to celebrate an important faith celebration and this was highly successful. Another young person plays football with a local team which is also a major achievement. The young people were all observed to be relaxed and happy and eager to attend a range of planned activities. There is

evidence that young people are able to take part in meaningful activities and build confidence and social skills.

Young people are all able to maintain excellent contact with their families and this is important for maintaining attachments and for building self-esteem and identity. Staff support young people to be able to have home stays or welcome families into the home for contact times.

Staff show great care for the young people and an example of this is the way staff provide support for one young person whose faith requires extensive separate arrangements to be made around worship, dress, food and celebrations. Staff not only do this willingly but are highly knowledgeable. This ensures this young person is able to fully practice their faith in a very supportive atmosphere. Staff work closely with a local religious leader to be able to do this so well.

Staff are able to keep good records on all the young people and these are up to date. Some of the records are too repetitive and some of the planning could be done in greater detail. This has been raised as a recommendation at this inspection. Some of the planning to identifying priority areas for joint work with school staff is very good and this helps maintain a consistent approach which will enable young people to make greater progress.

The home is maintained to a high standard and young people are able to personalise their rooms and parts of the house where they like to spend time.

The home is a very safe place to live. No young people go missing, there has been no bullying and there have been no child protection concerns at all. Young people feel safe and are able to fully enjoy all aspects of their care. There have been no complaints made at all.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/08/2014	Full	good
10/09/2013	Interim	good progress
24/06/2013	Full	good
05/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure the children's home has a clear statement of purpose. Ensure that the statement of purpose is up to date and is forwarded to HMCI. (NMS 13.1)
- Ensure information about the child is recorded clearly. In particular ensure planning records and summaries are not repetitive and are more detailed. (NMS 22.5)
- Ensure there are clear and effective procedures for monitoring the activities in the home. Specifically ensure the Regulation 34 report contains clear information. (NMS 21.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.