

# SC006294

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care for four children and young people who have emotional and/or social difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 2009 and has an appropriate management qualification.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

### Inspection dates: 21 and 22 February 2022

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 3 March 2020

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement            |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 03/03/2020      | Full            | Good                            |
| 19/02/2019      | Interim         | Declined in effectiveness       |
| 07/08/2018      | Full            | Good                            |
| 15/08/2017      | Full            | Requires improvement to be good |

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children receive care which is individualised to take account of their specific needs and vulnerabilities. Staff work alongside therapists and health workers to support changes in children's behaviour. This promotes children's safety and increases their opportunities to integrate successfully into society. Children make progress, becoming more emotionally mature, and developing a stronger sense of their own identity.

There are long-established relationships between staff, leaders, professionals and families, which makes effective communication easier. Children form strong bonds with the staff so that they feel able to share any anxieties and worries, and they value the advice and guidance they receive. When children are not ready to make changes, the staff are persistent at offering repeated opportunities to engage. This means that help is available at the point where children are willing to accept it.

When specialist therapy is not available, the manager advocates, challenges and escalates concerns about this. When there is disruption to children's schooling, the manager works with education specialists to resolve this effectively. This results in children making progress in these areas of their lives.

Children's views, wishes and feelings are central to their care. Their child-friendly care plans, and personalised monthly updates, summarise their achievements. Children's rewards are used as a way of incentivising their care, which is effective in motivating them to achieve their goals. Their personalised bedrooms are beautifully presented, showing the pride children take in them.

Children consistently say that they like living in the home and feel safe and settled. They are offered fun and interesting activities which give them new experiences.

Children have sometimes moved out of the home on an emergency basis. Despite this, the child's needs have remained paramount to any move-on plan, and there is reflection and learning about the outcome. This shows an awareness of the impact of placement breakdown on children who may already have experienced limited permanence in their lives.

When children live far from their family home, staff support them to maintain ties and arrange for them to visit when it is safe to do so. This helps children to retain a sense of their history and understand where they fit in the world.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

The children sometimes fall out with each other, but staff have strategies in place to manage these times of conflict or friction. Staff regularly consult with the children

about the challenges of group living, to make sure any emerging problems are identified early.

Children's risks are generally well understood by staff. There are plans to manage risks, which are regularly reviewed and updated. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of where children's vulnerabilities lie and work hard to mitigate associated risks. Staff are proactive in contacting and searching for children when they do not return at the expected time. This promotes a safe return.

However, not all the children's written risk management plans contain sufficiently clear steps for staff to follow. As a result, staff sometimes use their own judgement around what actions to take and when, to manage risky behaviour. This includes how to respond when children are negatively influenced by peer pressure and friendship groups. There is potential for individual staff to respond differently based on their own interpretation of how urgently they need to act. The lack of clarity does not promote a consistent response or outcome.

Incidents of self-harm have significantly reduced. This is due to a combination of children finding new ways to manage their emotions, alongside staff's improved ability to respond to patterns and triggers. Staff are skilled in helping children to better manage their own aggressive behaviour. This contributes to the occasional need to hold children to keep them and others safe.

Children's behaviour management plans are sometimes unclear. They do not give a clear description of children's behaviours and the risks when they become dysregulated, and what staff should do in response. This means children may receive inconsistent support from staff.

Staff have completed a wide range of training around safeguarding and risk management and apply this knowledge in their work. However, on one occasion when a child was assaulted on the head, staff did not seek medical attention. This left the child vulnerable.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager has been involved in multi-agency development work and is part of a pilot project around the management of children's missing episodes. This supports her aim to drive up the quality of care. For children, it means that staff use new ways of looking after them, and they feel valued.

The manager uses every opportunity to develop the staff's existing knowledge about childcare practice. This has involved staff attending workshops, reading articles and research papers and encouraging staff to reflect in a meaningful way on their own practice. This results in children being cared for by staff who have a detailed knowledge base and implement their learning on a day-to-day basis.

Staff receive regular supervision, which provides them with an opportunity to reflect on their practice. Staff are supported to manage the emotional impact of their work

of caring for vulnerable and complex children. This contributes to a resilient staff team when children's behaviour causes staff worry and anxiety.

The manager is thorough when assessing the impact of new children into the home. The matching records show the likely impact this would have on the children already living there. Her insight has led to a pause on some new admissions. This has enabled staff to focus on promoting the progress of the current children.

The manager ensures that the right health and social care professionals are involved to progress the children's plans. She challenges others when their practice falls short. This minimises drift and delay in getting children's needs met. Children are central to the manager's decision-making and she has appropriately high expectations of others. The manager demands nurturing and conscientious care from the staff team. This provides children with stability and allows them to flourish.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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      |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (Regulation 12 (1) (2)(a)(i)(v))</p> <p>This refers to risk assessments and plans, including detailed mitigating steps, with timeframes.</p> <p>This also refers to ensuring that behaviour management plans identify behaviour, staff response and what physical interventions should be used and when.</p> | 31 March 2022 |

### Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

### Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection

was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** SC006294

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Dove Adolescent Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Malvern View, Saxon Business Park, Hanbury Road, Stoke Prior, Bromsgrove B60 4AD

**Responsible individual:** Stacy Cooper

**Registered manager:** Amanda Farnaby

## Inspector

Rachel Ruth, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2022