

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC006294
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Dove Adolescent Services Limited
Responsible individual	Barbara Whittaker
Registered manager	Amanda Farnaby
Inspector	Debbie Foster

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC006294

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people continue to make progress over a sustained period of time, achieving academically, healthier life styles, gaining independence skills and keeping safe as a result of the consistent care and support they receive.
- Young people have placement stability, after a number of placement breakdowns. This provides them with a safe and secure home where they thrive.
- Young people benefit immensely from the specialist support accessed for the psychological and emotional needs to assist them to manage their feelings and emotions safely.
- Staff are highly dedicated and committed to make sure young people succeed. They actively advocate on their behalf in pursuit of the specialist services to make certain positive outcomes are achieved.
- Staff work proactively with professionals to ensure young people are cared for and supported consistently to improve their outcomes.
- Staff receive excellent training opportunities to make sure they are fully equipped with a comprehensive range of skills and knowledge to meet the needs of the young people in their care.
- Robust internal and external monitoring of the service detects shortfalls, which are promptly addressed to ensure standards of care remain high.

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):

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9) In particular, refresh the decoration in the shower room, its facilities and the hallway.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home, that is registered to care of up to four young people. The statement of purpose identifies the primary reason for a young person's placement is to support their emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/11/2014	Full	Outstanding
19/03/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress
24/07/2013	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
Young people make excellent progress and they are thriving. They have lived at the home for a long period, following a number of previous placement breakdowns. A professional said, 'X has lived in several other care homes while accessing school. This is the most stable she has been, it's been of great benefit, all round including her learning.' This stability assists them to feel safe and secure within their own home and supports their progress. Young people have very strong, positive and trusting relationships with staff who nurture them. Young people said, 'I get on with all staff,' and named particular staff who they have closer relationships with. As a result, young people are confident to go to staff to share any concern that they have. This is a stable staff team with the majority of them knowing the young people since their admission. This enables young people to build long-standing relationships, which provides them with security and consistency of care. Young people are actively listened to and influence their own day-to-day care and plans for their future with participation in their own care reviews. Young people speak with confidence, expressing their views openly. A young person said, 'If I've got something to say, I say it,' and another said, 'When I ask to go and see my brothers, staff sort this out for me, and take me.' Young people have daily discussions with staff. They are comfortable in their own home, freely express their feeling, thoughts and opinions. They have other consultation forums and opportunities, for example, regular key work sessions, young people's meetings and their statutory child care reviews. Young people know how to make a formal complaint. Staff actively listen to young people and respond to their requests. If they cannot facilitate these, an explanation is given. This allows young people to understand why something cannot take place. There is an open ethos within the home for young people to give their opinions and express themselves. As a result, young people have built their confidence and self-esteem, knowing that their views are listened to and taken seriously. Young people benefit immensely from the great emphasis to maintain their good health. They attend all routine health check-ups. Young people understand and follow a healthy balanced diet. Those who smoke have been made aware of the dangers to their health and staff continue to encourage them to stop or reduce this. Young people access frequent appointments and receive support from emotional and mental health services. Staff work tirelessly to ensure that young	

people's diverse health needs are met. They strongly advocate for them to access, much needed support and assessment to make certain that a full diagnosis of health conditions, including their, emotional and mental health needs. This ensures that young people have good or improving health, with the right support to fully meet their needs now and in the future.

Young people's education is given high priority. Their excellent attendance over a sustained period of time assists their continuous academic progress. A young person said, 'I enjoy school, I want to do well.' Staff work closely with professionals to best support young people's learning. They attend all parent's evenings and meetings. In recent weeks, staff have worked tirelessly to seek a new school provision for a young person who requires more specialist support with additional emotional health needs. This will make sure that a new education provision can better meet their individual and diverse needs. Young people's education progress provides them with a strong foundation and advantage to move onto further education and employment as young adults.

Young people profit from frequent contact with their families and those who are important to them. A young person said, 'I stay over at my mum's every weekend,' and another said, 'I see my brothers.' Staff work with family members, building positive relationships, which supports young people to maintain rewarding contact. Where there are difficulties, staff step in to mediate, support young people emotionally, and provide practical solutions to resolve the problems they experience. As a result, young people maintain connections with people who are important to them, promoting their sense of identity and belonging.

Young people are confident in their social and independence skills. They take an active role to undertake chores around the home. For example, washing pots, laundry and cooking meals. They are now confident to access the local community independently. They undertake the weekly food shop with staff. One said, 'I'm good at finding bargains and special offers, I found a few while we were shopping.' This demonstrates young people learn to budget. One young person cooks a meal using fresh ingredients each week for everyone's tea. As young people get older, staff work to build further on the necessary skills they need to look after themselves. Since the time of their admission, young people have made tremendous progress to learn life and independence skills. This equips them with the necessary skills to make a successful transition to adulthood.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Young people are safe. Staff are diligent and prioritise their safety. They live in a	

safe environment where risk-taking behaviour is minimal. They do not go missing from home. There have been no safeguarding incidents. Young people are safeguarded by staff's excellent understanding of their specific vulnerabilities and their adherence to their individual written risk assessments. These risk assessments are frequently reviewed and where required, up-dated. Consequently, young people are significantly safer and know how to keep themselves safe.

Young people and staff have an excellent understanding of the safe use of the internet and any potential dangers. They all undertake internet safety training before using the computer. Staff support young people where required and provide effective oversight. This keeps young people safe when using social media.

Young people's positive behaviour is promoted and commended at every opportunity by the staff. They routinely receive incentives and rewards for good behaviour. Young people respond positively to the clear, consistent boundaries and daily routines, which staff meticulously implement. This provides them with reliable care and support. Staff have an excellent awareness of the underlying causes which may trigger a decline in young people's behaviour. They implement support strategies to reduce or prevent such occurrences. Very few sanctions are made. When young people's behaviour becomes challenging, or a risk to themselves and others, staff promptly de-escalate the situation. Physical intervention is used appropriately to safeguard and protect the young person and others. These are constantly reviewed by the manager ensuring all interventions are appropriate.

Young people are safeguarded by the robust recruitment practices undertaken ensuring only suitable people are employed. In addition to the required checks, the provider takes additional checks in line with best practice safety measures.

Young people live in a safe environment where all health and safety matters are given high importance. All safety audits and checks are carried out at regular intervals, including; medication, fire systems, electric and gas supplies to ensure everyone's safety. The environment overall is kept and maintained to a good standard. However, there are signs of wear and tear to the decoration in the hallway and shower room. This does not impact on the excellent care provided to young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding

The registered manager has been in post for six years and has worked with young people in residential care for over 16 years. She holds the National Vocational Qualification level 4 in Leadership and Management.

Young people make progress as a result of the far-reaching commitment and pursuit of the very best support that can be accessed. This ethos is established by the registered manager and disseminates throughout the staff team. Each young person's care plan is explicitly followed and overtime, they make very good progress.

Staff benefit immensely from the guidance and monitoring of the manager and senior team. They receive regular formal supervision, where great importance is given to reflect on their care practices. This is further enhanced with regular discussions about the young people in daily handovers, de-brief sessions and monthly staff meetings. This provides consistency to care approaches, where staff strive to improve the outcomes for young people.

Staff receive highly effective training, which ensures that they can meet the complex needs of the young people in their care. A detailed induction provides essential foundation skills to staff. The majority of staff hold the level 3 diploma in caring for children and young people. They access essential on-going training such as child protection, behaviour management, first aid and health and safety. Young people benefit greatly from the extended skills and knowledge staff gain from supplementary, specialist training which keeps them up-to-date with current practice. For example, social pedagogy, child neglect, autism, life story work, foetal alcohol syndrome, self-harm and child sexual exploitation. This makes certain that staff are equipped with an array of skills and knowledge to care for young people exceptionally well.

Staff work superbly with professionals to best support young people. A professional said, 'This is a care home that always promotes the wellbeing and safety of young people. They have pushed to get all the additional support possible to ensure X is supported appropriately now and in the future. They are committed to young people. They are the best service I work with by a long way,' and another said, 'We work very closely together, staff go above and beyond to support X. Without doubt the best care home I work with.' All professionals state that communication with them is excellent. This partnership working ensures young people get the very best care and support to improve their outcomes now and in adulthood.

The manager has a clear vision on how the service operates. She has a number of audit systems which compliment her hands on approach to work alongside her staff team. This gives a very good oversight of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. Where shortfalls are noted, these are quickly addressed. Comprehensive external monitoring compliments the manager's thorough auditing of the service. This further examines the quality of the service, to identify additional improvements to make. This ensures the quality of care provided

remains of a high standard.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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