

SC018241

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 a privately owned children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to four young people of both genders who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home can accommodate young people of any age; however, normally they are between 12 and 18 years old. The admission process is robust and includes the completion of a shared living risk assessment which allows the young people's needs to be carefully matched with co-residents to ensure that the placement is in the best interests of all young people. The manager and staff endeavour to ensure that a warm, homely environment is created to inspire young people to feel safe and secure.

The registered manager is currently transitioning to a more senior position within the company and a new manager has been appointed and is in the process of registering.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 August 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 8 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2017	Full	Outstanding
06/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people continue to thrive and make sustained and measurable progress. Their experience of living in the home greatly enhances their life chances and gives them considerable security and stability. For example, one young person has been living in the home for 12 months, when previously she had experienced a turbulent history of placement disruptions.

Young people have benefited from very stable placements and have lived at the home for a considerable period, for some spanning over three years. They have effectively grown up in the care of the same staff team that never gives up on them. Staff clearly know the young people very well, helping them to achieve much better outcomes than might have been predicted. The unwavering level of staff support and guidance has enabled one young person to successfully leave the home with her baby following the birth.

The manager and staff go that extra mile to ensure that young people have life-changing experiences. One young person has been given the opportunity to go to Camp America and has thoroughly enjoyed the experience. The camp co-ordinator commented: '[Name of young person] is very friendly and outgoing and has not had any problems making friends. He truly has made the transition to Summit seamlessly.' These opportunities have greatly enhanced the young person's skills, confidence and future aspirations.

Young people have established very trusting relationships with staff. The rapport between the staff and the young people enables them to share their concerns and make really positive changes. Young people have said: 'Thank you for caring and looking after me when I need you' and 'You are an amazing team. I have come so far with living here, so thank you.' The environment is warm, homely and nurturing, and all the young people experience a real sense of belonging.

Staff actively promote young people's relationships with their families and are given excellent support. Staff communication and engagement with parents is especially good, as they understand the importance of repairing family relationships to benefit the young person as they transition into adulthood. A parent said: 'Staff at [name of home] have been such a presence and a big part of our lives, they have helped me a lot and have never given up on [name of young person].'

Staff actively advocate on behalf of the young people in all aspects of their lives. Despite their complex needs, young people are making excellent educational progress relative to their starting points, which they are sustaining, and staff continually support them to reach their full potential. For example, one young person obtained a distinction in health and social care due to the dedicated support of her key worker. Staff go above and beyond in researching and matching the young people to the most appropriate learning environment that best meets their needs.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Professional practice greatly enhances young people's safety and well-being. Young people's risks and vulnerabilities are well documented and clearly understood. Staff work extensively within a multi-agency framework of collaborative working that has helped the young people to understand the risks associated with, for example, social media. One young person is now trusted to have a level of unsupervised access to the internet that is gradually being increased.

Young people are helped to keep themselves safe and protected. Most young people rarely go missing. When young people do go missing or are absent without authorisation, staff are proactive in completing welfare checks and safe and well visits. A missing person police officer said: '[name of home] was the best home I have worked with in looking for young people who had not returned to the home.' This level of vigilance and proactive practice has seen one young person making safer choices and better decision-making.

Staff have built very strong and trusting relationships with the young people. Staff are intuitive and can often predict triggers that can result in incidents of self-harm or other risk-taking behaviours. The manager and staff actively support and encourage young people's engagement in specialist help that has seen, for one young person, a significant reduction in self-harm.

Staff promote open and transparent discussions on issues such as sexual health, sexuality and safe relationships. As a result of this effective dialogue, young people are more equipped to identify exploitative and coercive relationships. Staff will always meet young people's friends, boyfriends and girlfriends, including their parents, and make this a home where they are welcome to visit. Young people have also enjoyed overnight stays with their friends, thus giving them a greater sense of social inclusion.

The manager is proactive in utilising research to inform practice in understanding behaviours associated with, for example, trauma and attachment. This has led to highly innovative life-story work being undertaken with the young people, helping them to accept and move forward in their lives and giving them a platform for learning and progression. A social worker said: 'I am happy with how the placement is working and feel that [name of young person] has made remarkable progress and is settled and happy.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. However, she is in the process of taking up a more senior position within the company. A new manager has been appointed and is working alongside the registered manager. This was an internal promotion which has been managed well and a planned transition that has resulted in minimal disruption for the young people and the staff team.

The newly appointed manager is demonstrating a continued commitment to the overall ethos of the home, providing stability of care for the young people and continuity of support and leadership for the staff. The environment continues to feel homely and replicates a family atmosphere. This gives the young people a great sense of ownership,

knowing that staff really care and will go that extra mile for them.

The manager has a clear understanding and oversight of the young people and wants what is best for them. The manager and staff are very child centred and focused on working together to help young people make positive choices and enable them to reach their full potential.

The home has received a number of compliments from parents and professionals. This demonstrates the staff team's and manager's continued commitment in meeting the complex needs of the young people in their care.

The manager goes beyond the annual survey to inform and develop practice. She uses questionnaires and consultation with parents, young people and professionals to review and develop care practice. Equally, the manager utilises internal and external reporting and review systems to monitor and evaluate the service.

The manager and staff have developed effective communication and partnership working with external agencies, professionals and parents. A professional reported: 'Communication is excellent with me and all professionals. The manager and deputy attend all meetings.'

The home is undergoing a change in recording activity and the company is in the process of bedding in a new electronic recording system. Although this continues to be work in progress, it has no negative impact on the quality and delivery of care.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC018241

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Registered provider address: 170 Southgate, Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF8 1QJ

Responsible individual: Barbara Whittaker

Registered manager: Leanne Smith

Inspector

Cath Sikakana: social care inspector

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