

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC355755
Inspector	Simon Morley
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Dove Adolescent Services Limited
Registered person address	170 Southgate Pontefract West Yorkshire WF8 1QJ
Responsible individual	Barbara Anne Whittaker
Registered manager	Neill James Robinson
Date of last inspection	10/12/2013

Inspection date	08/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The hard work of the staff team, good safeguarding practice, highly personalised care planning and effective working together with partner-agencies and relatives underpin the success of this service. Young people receive an excellent quality of care that leads to good outcomes. The service makes a positive difference to young people's lives.

Young people say they like the home and staff. They raise no concerns about their care. Staff are skilled at establishing meaningful relationships with young people. As a result the risks to young people's safety are effectively managed and they are kept safe.

Leadership and management arrangements are strong and child focused. The manager and staff are eager to see young people do well. The quality of care is robustly monitored with a focus on improving outcomes for young people.

There were no identified areas for improvement.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2013	Interim	good progress
16/04/2013	Full	good
27/02/2013	Interim	good progress
04/12/2012	Full	adequate

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people like the home and have stated it is 'the best placement' they have had. Young people develop positive relationships with the staff and have a good say in the running of the home, which helps them feel comfortable and relaxed.

Young people receive high levels of support for their education and employment requirements. There has been some recent success with attendance and achievements with work experience. However, a lack of attendance and commitment on a regular basis means that young people are not able to fully achieve their potential in education and work training situations.

Young people attend some social and sporting activities and benefit from the extra time spent with staff doing this to build even stronger relationships. Individuals do not make full use of these opportunities to develop their social skills and interests further, preferring to spend time with friends in the local community. At times this involves low levels of substance misuse despite the efforts of staff to provide and encourage alternative options. Young people have built positive relationships with elderly neighbours which enhances their confidence and esteem in helping contribute to the community.

Young people make significant progress with their behaviour and in comparison to previous placements this is excellent progress. One stakeholder commented, 'Considering how far he has come, I think he's doing brilliantly to be stable and out of trouble.'

Young people benefit from the proactive arrangements in place to address their health. They generally enjoy good health and understand the importance of a healthy lifestyle. With encouragement young people start to re-engage with external health services such as the dentist. Young people learn about health issues such as drug awareness and sexual health. They have good opportunities to take personal responsibility for their health. Staff continue to promote better health and engage young people to make better lifestyle choices.

Young people benefit from the arrangements for contact with family and friends meaning they can keep in touch with people important to them. Staff facilitate and encourage communication offering individualised support in order that visits and contact can be successful and positive. This helps to reinforce young people's family ties and cultural identity.

Young people acquire skills which will benefit their transition to adult life. They are encouraged to travel independently, open bank accounts, learn about budgeting and continue to develop their practical skills such as laundry, cooking and health and

safety practice. This supports young people to be well prepared for the transition to adulthood.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people receive a very individualised provision of care where the manager and staff have high aspirations for them to achieve. Staff want young people to succeed to the best of their ability and live safely in the community. Their strong determination to make a difference to young people's lives has a significant impact on young people's experiences and outcomes.

Staff influence outcomes through care planning and intervention that is targeted and highly responsive to individual needs of young people. Regular updates and reviews of the plans are carried out so that goals can be adjusted to ensure they are realistic. Along with the genuine warmth and concern provided, young people develop the confidence and security to make good progress in their lives. Young people are involved in the compilation of their individual plans and are supported to ensure their views are heard at reviews and planning meetings.

Staff members form positive relationships with young people and understand their needs fully. A stakeholder commented, 'Staff know him well, and are really supportive and encouraging with him.' They are committed to young people's progress and continue to engage them even when young people are not making positive choices, for example, in relation to education. Proactive and imaginative methods are used including sourcing various work placements and developing tailored individual education programmes. This puts young people's well being at the centre of practice by providing meaningful opportunities for educational achievement and career development.

An excellent strength of the staff team is how young people are empowered to make choices and decisions about their lives. Consultation with young people is very strong. Young people's views inform and shape their placement plans and day to day running of the home. This helps young people to feel that they are listened to. A stakeholder commented: 'He is given choices about his activities. He is always supported to take part in his reviews and to talk to his social worker and reviewing officer without staff being present. He is positive about relationships in placement.'

Young people benefit from strong inter-agency working. The manager and staff successfully utilise their relationships with other agencies to promote young people's safety, education and health. For example, there is integrated working with school, work experience providers, a substance misuse agency and local police community support officer. There is good communication about young people's needs and they benefit from extra support to help them progress and reduce risky behaviour.

Similarly there is additional support from children and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). Young people may wait a long time, up to a year, to access this service from point of referral. However CAMHS provide details of other agencies that offer similar services should young people want to access professional therapeutic support sooner.

The home environment is calm, welcoming and well-maintained. There are high levels of investment in the home in terms of décor, furnishings, resources and avoiding institutional aspects such as notice boards. This gives young people a clear message that they are valued and welcome.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people feel safe and secure with adults that they can trust. Previous behaviours in relation to violent outbursts and criminal behaviour have ceased. Staff receive regular training and practice guidance in relation to safeguarding young people and protecting and promoting their welfare. They consistently provide a physically and emotionally safe and secure environment for young people who benefit from the stability this gives them.

Through building trusting relationships with young people and effective behaviour management strategies, the staff team support young people to significantly improve their behaviour. The team are committed to the minimal use of physical intervention, which has not been used since the last inspection. Staff members will only intervene in this way when it is required to protect a young person. This approach to supporting young people adds to the homely environment and helps young people gain better control of their emotions and behaviours. A stakeholder commented, 'He is encouraged to make positive choices, and to take responsibility for less positive decisions and their consequences.'

Staff set clear and structured expectations for when young people go out, although young people do not always adhere to these and on occasion stay out at friends homes. Staff proactively work with young people to minimise the times they are absent. Staff practice helps limit the risks as far as possible to missing young people and enable their safe return. Staff spend time looking for young people, go to known addresses of friends and use regular telephone contact. When friends have moved staff are proactive in trying to find where to, as young people do not always share this information.

The manager and staff work well in partnership with contacts in the police, children's services and other agencies to agree strategies and actions to be taken to reduce risks that young people place themselves in. An example of this regards phases of cannabis use which compromises a young person's welfare, safety and health. The approach to multi-agency work helps to ensure a transparent and cohesive approach to any concerns. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding practice and the

ways that they can protect the welfare of young people.

Comprehensive risk assessments are individualised to young people's needs, strengths and vulnerabilities. Specific areas of assessment link into a young person's placement plan and are cross-referenced to focussed key working sessions with young people. Assessments are updated regularly to reflect any change in a young persons' needs and progress. This strong approach to risk management implemented by the staff team helps keep young people safe but also allows them to take age appropriate risks and develop their independence.

High staffing levels contribute significantly to the effective protection of young people by providing one to one support and supervision when needed.

Young people live in a safe and very well-maintained environment. Regular health and safety checks including the fire safety checks ensure that the environment is physically safe. There are robust recruitment policies and procedures to ensure staff working with young people in the home are carefully selected and vetted.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post since January 2012. He is suitably qualified and experienced to run the home with support from a senior member of staff.

Leadership and management arrangements contribute to a culture in which the needs of young people come first. The home has a lovely, friendly, positive and welcoming atmosphere. Young people are well looked after by the staff members who are experienced, qualified, trained and well supported. New staff progress quickly with motivation from the manager towards achieving the required qualification.

The staff team are fully committed and enthusiastic in delivering the best possible outcomes for young people. Staff report that they are very well supported through the provision of regular supervision, team meetings and annual appraisal. This ensures they are competent and consistently provide a high quality of care to young people.

The manager has a good degree of professional knowledge and shares this with staff keeping everyone up-to-date with practice developments. In addition he attends a regular therapeutic forum where young people's needs are considered, care strategies are reflected on and professional psychological advice given. This allows issues to be openly discussed and methods of working with young people reviewed, which is of benefit to their emotional wellbeing.

The records kept about young people are well organised. They provide a clear picture of the impact of the service on them and the positive outcomes that they achieve.

At the last inspection in December 2013, two actions were set to ensure that there is better consultation with young people, their relatives and placing authorities in regard to management monitoring of the home. This area of practice has improved. An independent visitor is effectively monitoring the management arrangements and quality of care on a monthly basis. This interlinks with the manager's monthly audits and quarterly reports sent to Ofsted. These integrated systems contribute to identifying any areas for improvement and keep standards of care high.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.