

SC355755

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider operates and runs this home. This is a single-occupancy home and therefore provides care for just one child, irrespective of gender, who is of any age and has social and/or emotional difficulties. The registered manager has been managing this home since October 2011.

Inspection dates: 24 April 2019

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: 23 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2018	Full	Good
13/06/2017	Full	Good
06/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person is supported by staff and continues to make progress in most areas of his development. The young person benefits from good engagement and attendance at college, and has plans to shortly take examinations. The young person has a high level of commitment to his associated work placement and has a strong work ethic. Staff take an active interest in the young person's future plans and provide him with information about employment and training. They speak to him regularly about his different career options.

Staff provide individualised care for the young person, who has developed positive relationships with the manager and some staff members. This helps him to be open and honest with staff about sensitive issues. Staff provide the young person with information and advice about issues that affect him, such as identity and diversity. This extends to the manager proactively involving external agencies when more specialist intervention needs to take place.

Staff develop good relationships with family members. This has led to the young person spending more meaningful time with his family away from the home. This emphasis on keeping family ties provides extra support which will be important when the young person leaves the home.

Staff work with the young person to develop independent living skills. This is progressing well, and staff are fully aware of the areas which need further development. The young person's involvement in the running of the home also provides opportunities to develop decision-making skills. Staff are strong advocates, representing the young person to make sure there is a smooth, planned transition when he leaves for his adult accommodation.

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

The safety of the young person is a priority for staff. The staff work in partnership with key people in the young person's life, and with professionals so as to deliver seamless services. Staff use clear approaches to minimise risk and educate the young person to develop his own safety strategies.

Staff promote clear expectations, boundaries and structure to help the young person to feel secure. Incidents of negative behaviour are less frequent due to the young person's progress in regulating his emotions. Staff use de-escalation skills and restorative practice methods. This helps the young person to understand the importance of consequences, while learning about the impact of his behaviours on others and his environment.

The young person's missing-from-home episodes have greatly reduced in number.

However, the risk associated with child sexual exploitation is still high. Staff are proactive and work closely with the police and community support officers. This includes information-sharing about risks to the young person and working together to locate the young person when he is missing. Staff are highly vigilant, sharing any useful intelligence, such as telephone numbers or car registration numbers.

The good working relationships with the police have also developed the staff team's knowledge of gangs and county lines, and potential risk in the community. This means they can collectively safeguard young people.

The police also complete safe-and-well interviews with young people upon their return from being missing. These are reinforced by interviews with an independent person who is commissioned by the placing authority. However, when this does not occur, the staff speak to the young person instead. This does not provide young people with an independent person to speak to.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by an effective and experienced manager. His approachable manner and management style promote regular, reflective discussions between staff members. The manager has an excellent understanding of the young person's needs.

The provider has introduced a computerised recording system which the staff find easy to use. Recording is clear and detailed, and evidences the progress the young person is making against his care plans and targets. The young person is fully involved in his care planning, and has access to the computerised information. The staff's consistency in recording helps the manager to maintain effective management oversight.

The team now comprises a mix of established and new members of staff, who bring an eclectic variety of experience and skills. The manager makes sure that there are regular team meetings and supervisions in order to strengthen the small team and ensures that there is consistent practice. The staff have a common goal of making sure they provide the best possible care, with the young person saying this is 'the best children's home' he has lived in.

The manager challenges and escalates concerns on behalf of the young person, including making sure there is an independent advocate to represent the young person's views.

The statement of purpose is the provider's generic document, which is confusing in parts when it refers to other homes. Since the last inspection, the manager has taken steps to meet the requirement and recommendations. This has led to more focused discussions with the young person and improved living conditions.

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

Recommendations

- The information set out in the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6). Specifically, to make the Statement of Purpose more personalised and not the provider's generic document.
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30). Specifically, to ensure arrangements are in place for an independent return home interview when this is not completed by the placing authority.

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: SC355755

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: Neill Robinson

Inspector

Tina Ruffles: social care inspector

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