

## Children's homes inspection full

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|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>26 April 2016</b>                                         |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC355755</b>                                              |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Full</b>                                                  |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's home</b>                                       |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Dove Adolescent Services Limited</b>                      |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>170 Southgate, Pontefract,<br/>West Yorkshire WF8 1QJ</b> |

|                               |                           |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Barbara Whittaker</b>  |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Neill Robinson</b>     |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Jacqueline Malcolm</b> |

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|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>26 April 2016</b>           |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>Sustained effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                    |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                                |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                    |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                                |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Requires improvement</b>    |
| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Requires improvement</b>    |

**SC355755**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people live in a positive home environment where the staff team invest in their good care with the intention of stimulating their improved outcomes.
- The departure of a young person who moved closer to his home is a positive example of staff listening to young people and acting on their wishes and feelings.
- The young person's progress is testament to the good care, help and protection that the dedicated and intuitive staff team invested in him during his time at the home.
- The manager and staff team are highly experienced, skilled, resilient and committed to meeting young people's diverse and complex needs.
- Issues in relation to care planning, risk management and the escalation process relating to a new young person to the home at high risk of sexual exploitation are identified areas that requires improvement.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | Due date     |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| <p>5. Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met</p> <p>In order to meet the quality standard, the registered person must ensure that staff -</p> <p>(5)(a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>(b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;</p> <p>(c) if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans.</p> | 31 May 2016  |
| <p>8. The education standard</p> <p>In order to meet the education standard, the registered person must ensure -</p> <p>8 (2)(a) that staff -</p> <p>(i) help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>(iv) help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | 30 June 2016 |
| <p>12. The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, in particular to develop clear risk management guidance on the use of the internet and mobile phones, the registered person must ensure -</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | 31 May 2016  |

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| <p>12(2)(a) that staff–</p> <p>(ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>(b) that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.</p>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                    |
| <p>14. The care planning standard</p> <p>In order to meet the care planning standard, in particular to ensure consistently good care planning practices, the registered provider must ensure that children–</p> <p>(1)(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home;</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure -</p> <p>(b) that arrangements are in place to -</p> <p>(i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home;</p> <p>(c) that each child’s relevant plans are followed</p> | <p>31 May 2016</p> |

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

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

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 16 March 2016   | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 8 December 2015 | Full            | Good                    |
| 2 March 2015    | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 8 December 2014 | Full            | Good                    |

## Inspection judgements

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | Judgement grade |
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| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>Good</b>     |
| <p>The caring and committed staff are experienced, child focussed and speak affectionately about the young person who left and the current young person's characteristics and strengths. Their talents in engaging with young people, developing mutually positive relationships and representing as significant role models show promise. Listening to young people's wishes and feelings is seamlessly integrated into care practices. This ensures that young people's views are listened to and acted on, whether these are about planning their activities or helping to negotiate their future options. For example, listening to a young person resulted in him successfully moving closer to home and near to his family. This was a good ending to an overall positive experience for the young person. He was able to say a proper farewell when the staff team travelled to meet him for a meal out. The manager described the progress made by the young person as 'massive' and said, 'He matured with us', given his adverse starting point.</p> <p>Staff promote the value of a good education and they aspire for all young people in their care to succeed. Those young people who have experienced years of disengagement in formal learning environments find difficulty resuming their education. Despite such debilitating barriers, the team works with its education partners to secure an educational or alternative provision to provide a daily structure and help to unleash the young person's potential. However, the young person chooses to stay in bed and their non-engagement in education is yet to show signs of success.</p> <p>The staff team promotes the young person's health. Good links with the looked after children's nurse act as a conduit for information sharing. This ensures that the young person's medical history is quickly gathered. It also enables important medical concerns to be flagged up, so that the young person has prompt access to health services. Individual work with the young person on specific health matters provides staff with an insight into her health needs.</p> <p>The young person's contact with her family enables her to maintain blood ties and reinforces a positive sense of identity. Staff take the time to acquaint themselves with family members so that they can work together to meet the agreed placement objectives.</p> <p>Support to develop young people's independence skills is good. For example, understanding how to budget, cook, shop and travel independently are just some of the benefits that young people reap from being able to do more for themselves. Those young people with more complex needs and high risks are treated</p> |                 |

cautiously and incrementally until the plans for them are fully determined.

Not all new placements are supported by timely planning meetings. This delay does not provide the staff team with the relevant plans that identify how a specific young person should be cared for and how all their individual needs and risks are to be met.

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| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| <p>Delays in the receipt of current care planning documents for the new young person to the home have meant that the contents of her in-house risk management plans have not yet been reviewed and ratified at a planning meeting. There is no agreed strategy to address the potential for her unsafe activities on the internet. This is despite her signing up to agreements regarding the safe use of computers. Similarly, the young person's unsupervised use of her mobile phone when in the privacy of her bedroom exposes her to unmanaged high risk and as a consequence requires improvement. This is because of the clear and present threat of child sexual exploitation that without full guidance inhibits the staff from effectively safeguarding the young person and helping them understand how to keep safe.</p> <p>Young people have not been missing from home for some time. A young person who was recently discharged from the home had a number of unauthorised absences. This was due to him staying without permission with family, but he maintained contact with the staff team. Subsequent visits to monitor his well-being promoted his safety and welfare. An independent reviewing officer expressed satisfaction with this arrangement. She said, 'I certainly didn't feel there was any gap in their procedures or responses to him.' Staff follow the protocol should a young person absent themselves from the home without authority. This results in a well-coordinated response from staff and professionals that ensures their prompt and safe return.</p> <p>Clear routines, boundaries and positive rewards help young people to develop socially acceptable behaviours. Staff trained in an approved behaviour-management technique skilfully build positive and trusting relationships with young people. This has significantly improved the outcomes of a young person who has recently moved on. His independent reviewing officer said, 'Before going to this home, he was struggling to regulate his behaviour and stabilise any placement. He was able to achieve this with the staff commitment to him.' Likewise, a new young person to the home has already started to bond with some staff, which has made her feel sufficiently comfortable to disclose sensitive information.</p> |                             |

The restorative approach to behaviour management is the method used to challenge negative behaviours, in preference to restraint. A staff member reflecting on a young person's improved behaviour said, 'He seemed to figure out that it was better to work with us than against us.'

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>Requires improvement</b> |
| <p>A permanent, experienced and suitably qualified registered manager has been in post since 2011. In his absence, a competent senior staff member of several years standing leads and supports the reliable and proactive staff team.</p> <p>A young person was admitted to the home the day after the formal discharge of a young person who had experienced good placement stability. Adults other than a social worker accompanied her on admission, and the staff team welcomed her with sensitivity and care. However, a timely planning meeting with the placing authority has not been held, to effect the prompt implementation of her current and relevant plans. The delay has led to uncertainty about how the young person's care needs and high risks are to be met. The manager and staff cannot explain to her the reason for moving to this home nor confirm her future plans because they are not in possession of the full facts. This contributes to significant delay and can prevent the young person from investing in the placement as her new home.</p> <p>Furthermore, there has been insufficient rigorous challenge to obtain the desired and timely information from the placement authority. Several unsuccessful attempts made by the manager to secure a planning meeting with the placing authority have not been robustly challenged and escalated to the next senior professional. This does not ensure that the young person's needs are swiftly met, and endorsed in accordance with clear and current plans and risk management strategies.</p> <p>Internal and external monitoring includes consultations with young people, staff and professionals to ensure that their views are included in the subsequent reports. This enables the manager to maintain clarity and oversight of the home's performance, understand the home's strengths and learn lessons from weakness.</p> <p>Established and knowledgeable staff represent a resilient and astute team that experience positive morale. A staff member said, 'We all work well as a team. We are a good team.' The staff team has been running with a deficit of two staff, which will be resolved within weeks following the induction of two permanent staff to the home. Familiar casual staff provide stability to the young person during the staff shortages, with no negative impact on her welfare.</p> |                             |

Staff feel well supported and supervised by the manager, which inspires them to stay motivated. A staff member said, '(Name of the manager) is very approachable. I have no fears in questioning him. He won't cut you off.' The majority of staff have a relevant childcare qualification with one close to completing their course. Opportunities for learning and reflective discussions through team meetings, daily handovers and impromptu discussions promote consistent practice. In addition, regular training ensures that staff update their skills and knowledge and apply their learning accordingly.

The manager's involvement at provider forums refreshes his learning about current childcare topics, and he shares pertinent information with the staff team. He said, 'You never finish your learning in this job.' Professionals comment favourably about the level of communication that staff share with them. An independent reviewing officer for the previous placement said, 'Communication has been excellent with routine updates, as well as any urgent issues, being passed on.'

The requirement and two recommendations raised at the last inspection have been met. Individual work with the young person includes some discussion about risk. Although early days and pending the planning meeting, close monitoring of the agreed goals and targets, in care plans and risk assessments, should provide a clearer focus. A young person's pathway plan was made available to the home not long before he moved on to his next placement.

## 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 children looked after 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 that 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 whom 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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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)  
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