

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC471178
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	Stacy Cooper
Date of last inspection	N/A

Inspection date	09/07/2014
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Previous inspection	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	This is the first inspection of the home since it was registered. No enforcement action has been taken.

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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Young people receive excellent individualised care and support from staff to achieve good outcomes, improve their lifestyles and future prospects. Young people make good progress in different aspects of their welfare, improve their self worth and feel more confident about themselves. Staff aim high for the young people at this home helping most of them achieve significant outcomes since they have moved here. A parent said, 'I am very happy with the home.'

Young people lead an active life at the home and are able to enjoy a range of activities. A strong feature at the home is the good promotion of education. Young people's educational achievements are positive compared with when they arrived at the home. Staff provide young people with high standards of care and constantly challenge barriers to the potential of the young people to achieve. Young people's well-being is at the forefront of the care at this home.

Staff are competent and able to fulfil their safeguarding responsibilities so that young people are protected and feel safe living in this home. Staff implement comprehensive risk management strategies which provide young people with an individual approach to their care to keep them safe. Behaviour management is very

effective and based on the trust and respect established between young people and staff.

The manager runs the home well and is a strong leader. Staff are clear about their roles and supported to provide young people with high standards of care. There is a passion for excellence in the management team to continue to improve the outcomes for young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned; registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people of either gender with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The main house has four bedrooms and there is a separate self-contained semi-independence flat.

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people achieve some excellent outcomes in a wide range of social and emotional aspects of their lives. They work with staff to bring about significant changes in their lives. For example they are more confident, have better self-esteem, do not self-harm, build trusting relationships with adults and use this security to pursue their individual interests. Not all young people take full advantage of the opportunities offered to them and in some aspects of their lives outcomes are not so good.

The educational attendance and achievements of young people are good when compared to their experience before coming to this home. Almost all young people engage in education based on their individual needs. This improves their life chances when they are considering further education and looking for employment. All young people receive individual support, tailored to their needs regardless of any barriers they present in pursuing an education.

Young people enjoy a wealth of sporting, social and recreational activities both within the home and the local community. These include running, going to the gym, football, ice skating, baking, art and craft, and playing musical instruments. Young people look forward to the 'jamming' sessions with staff, go to the theatre and access drama and dance clubs. These experiences contribute significantly to their social, educational and emotional development. A carer commented, 'Staff do everything to keep them happy and content'.

Young people develop their understanding of health issues and how to look after themselves. This includes regular exercise, healthy diets and work around reduction in smoking, alcohol, substance misuse and exploitation. Young people benefit from exploring these and other lifestyle issues safely with staff and additional support services. Young people also improve their emotional health from engaging with the support available from mental health services.

All young people enjoy regular contact with family and friends benefitting from the strong approach to including families in their care. This helps young people maintain continuity in important relationships and retain their sense of identity. Young people benefit from the individualised support to increase contact with their families and where appropriate move back home.

Young people improve their independence skills which will benefit their transition to adult life. They open bank accounts, learn to budget, develop their house keeping skills and increase their awareness of health and safety issues. Young people's varied commitment to engage with staff is linked to how much they progress in this area.

Quality of care

outstanding

Staff want the best for young people and have high aspirations for young people to succeed. Staff actively encourage young people to do well in all aspects of their lives and support them to enjoy life at the home.

There is a very warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere at the home. Staff promote respect and encourage young people to have good relationships with each other. A social worker said, 'I am impressed with the professionalism, enthusiasm and commitment of staff.'

Staff form very good relationships with young people and have an excellent understanding of their needs.

They are able to use their skills and understanding to continue engaging with young people even when they are not willing to interact positively. Staff's commitment, persistent and sensitivity puts young people at the heart of what happens in the home. This also ensures the wishes and views of young people influence the running of the home. Young people are included in agreeing their individual plans and behaviour targets. They are supported to ensure their views are heard at reviews and planning meetings by staff who will advocate for them. Young people are able to make choices about their lifestyles and daily routines. Young people said, 'Staff are nice, we like the home and they look after us well.'

Staff work individually with young people in line with their care plans and assessed needs. These plans are of a high quality, regularly reviewed and care strategies evaluated based on the progress and outcomes young people have achieved. Staff undertake a wide range of one to one work with young people promoting their diverse needs and helping them explore their heritage. Staff take young people to places where they grew up, teach them about different cultures and promote their identity. Young people complete a 'Journey book' with pictures, photos and other memorabilia which promotes their individuality and helps them understand their experience and backgrounds. A social worker commented, 'Staff have facilitated education in the broadest sense.'

A key strength is the ability of staff to use their own skills and interests to promote a wide range of activities for young people. Particularly exemplary are the music sessions and young people using recording studios to make a CD of their own songs about being in care and their future ambitions. The planning of activities contributes to young people's personal and social learning. The range of choice for young people is outstanding.

Staff provide strong support to young people so they value their education. There are robust arrangements in place with the Registered Provider's own school. These contribute to young people having up to date educational assessments especially when they have previously struggled to attend mainstream schools. There are

excellent arrangements for providing young people with home tutoring. Staff ensure young people follow a weekly timetable that meets their individual educational needs. Staff help young people complete curriculum vitae and apply for jobs and college courses. The manager makes good use of local education services to advise young people about further education and careers. This ensures that the young people are given the best possible chance to achieve educationally and in their future. Staff continue to encourage young people and explore different strategies with them even when they are resistant to engaging in their education.

Strong professional links have been established with partner services to ensure young people receive support and resources to support them. For example young people engage with work about reducing substance misuse, learning to avoid exploitation and take part in therapeutic work about their mental health. A social worker said. 'Staff harness the support of a wide range of professionals.'

The home is decorated to a high standard, comfortably furnished and combined with the excellent care provided by staff enables young people to feel in a secure place to develop their potential.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are safe living in this home where safeguarding is a central feature. Staff are persistent and effective in implementing the safeguarding procedures and protocols that are in place to keep young people safe. Young people confirmed they feel safe and get along with each other, no one is bullied. Young people are confident that there are plenty of adults to talk and they will be listened to if they have any concerns.

All staff receive regular training about safeguarding issues including issues around missing from care and exploitation of children and young people. They know the actions to take to take if there are any concerns or allegations of harm to a young person. There is a robust, thorough approach to prevent young people from wanting to go missing from the home. When any of the young people are absent, staff exhaust all possible measures to ensure they return safely. There is effective communication with young people, their family, friends, police and local authority of their whereabouts. Staff frequently go out and look for anyone who is missing and do not rest until they are safe. When young people do not reduce the frequency of going missing the manager is proactive at working with safeguarding agencies, reviewing strategies and the young persons placement. This ensures all possible action is taken to safeguard young people.

There are thorough risk management plans in place that address individual young people's vulnerabilities such as self harm and emotional well-being. These are frequently reviewed and allow young people to take sensible risks as part of their normal development and transition to independent living. Likewise there are very

effective behaviour management strategies and staff are trained in de-escalation skills. This results in young people developing good behaviour and learning new ways of coping with difficult situations. Staff rarely give sanctions as a consequence and have not had to use physical intervention as a way of keeping a young person safe. A carer said, 'He seems to be a lot calmer and happier.'

Young people enjoy living in a home which provides a safe and secure environment. Staff complete regular health and safety checks and follow a range of safety procedure to protect young people from potential hazards. This includes fire drills, to ensure young people know what to do in case of an emergency. In addition, the vetting and recruitment of people working at the home is particularly thorough to make sure only appropriate adults work there.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post since the home opened last November. She has plenty of previous experience as a manager, is very able and suitably qualified to run the home. She provides strong leadership and is supported by a deputy and staff team committed to improving the lives of young people. For example the intensive work undertaken to promote young people's well-being, keep them safe and improve their education. This has resulted in marked improvements in education, better self-esteem and reduced risk taking behaviour for the majority of young people. This contrasts significantly from their starting points when they initially moved into the home. The manager is clear about the strengths and areas for development at the home. For example this is a new home, with new staff and the manager aims to make it even more cohesive to continue to improve outcomes for young people.

There is regular monitoring of the standards of care, achievements of young people and progress they make since admission to the home. Management monitoring is of a high quality and enhanced by rigorous monthly inspection undertaken by the Registered Provider. These quality assurance processes include listening to young people, their parents and social workers to ensure their views make a significant contribution to the positive experiences of young people. Monitoring information is used to review and adapt care plans continuing to help young people develop

The manager ensures the home operates in line with the aims and objectives as set out in the Statement of Purpose. A user-friendly children's guide provides young people with important information about the home and staff will take time to explain to young people important aspects such as pocket money, rules and expectations. These written documents provide young people, their parents, social workers and staff with a clear indication of what to expect from the home, style and ethos of care practices.

Staff are effectively supervised to ensure that they are supported in fulfilling their

roles and that their performance is monitored by the manager. The arrangements for training and developing staff are thorough and comprehensive. New staff complete an induction and progress towards completing the required qualification. All staff complete a range of mandatory training, refresher course and training in particular areas such as self-harm, substance misuse and promoting self-esteem. This ensures staff keep their skills and knowledge up to date and are competent in looking after young people.

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.