

SC471178

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is a privately registered four-bedroom residential children's home which can accommodate up to four children or young people, irrespective of gender, who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

There is also a small, separate building, used as a semi-independence training flat, which raises the number of children and young people the home can accommodate to five.

The home can accommodate children and young people of any age; however, normally they are between 12 and 18 years old. The admission process is robust and children's and young people's needs are carefully matched with co-residents, including age, stage and emotional development, to ensure that the placement is in the best interests of all the children and young people. A full shared living risk assessment is completed prior to admission.

The manager was registered in August 2018.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 December 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	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 14 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2017	Full	Outstanding
28/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/01/2017	Full	Outstanding
26/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children and young people living at the home develop secure and trusting relationships with the adults who look after them. This forms the foundation from which the children and young people make progress, even in the face of their past traumas and challenges they may present. A member of staff said: 'You need to understand the past and that gives you the ability to deal with current needs.'

Staff listen to the children and young people and focus on their strengths. Specialist advice and consultation have helped staff to interpret behaviours and respond in ways that have helped the children and young people to regulate and reflect on their behaviour in a more positive way. A social worker said: 'I am hugely impressed at the commitment and resilience of the manager and the staff in meeting the complex needs of [name of child].' Research-informed practice has clearly improved outcomes for children and young people relative to their starting points.

Two young people have successfully transitioned from the home into supported accommodation. Highly individualised and well-documented pathway plans, in conjunction with collaborative working, have ensured that the young people have received continuity of support and care. A professional commented: 'This has truly been one of the best transitions we have ever had for a new young person. The information [the home] provided, the last-minute meetings, the open communication, etc. has just been so helpful during the whole process from the very beginning.'

The manager and staff go above and beyond in ensuring that the staff team is suitably skilled and equipped to help the children and young people manage their emotions, their cultural needs and gender identity. In preparation for one admission to the home, the staff ensured that they were knowledgeable on Roma culture and language. This additional knowledge clearly helped the young person settle quickly and immediately feel a sense of belonging.

Education is a key strength of the home and given high priority. Staff persevere with children and young people to identify the right provision based on individual interests. This has seen one young person re-engage in education following a significant period of being disheartened and feeling not listened to in previous care homes. A social worker commented: '[Name of young person] has been out of education for two and a half years and now, relative to time in placement, is doing really well. It's been fantastic to see this development.'

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

The manager and staff have experienced a period of instability, and some children and young people have experienced increased levels of anti-social and risk-taking behaviour. This has been a testing time for all staff. The consistent approach and responses to such behaviour have been effective in ensuring that the children and young people remain

safe and in maintaining the well-being of all the children and young people, which has helped them to move forward.

Care plans and risk assessments are relevant to the individual needs and vulnerabilities of the children and young people. The plans and assessments are regularly updated to reflect current behaviour and strategies to manage this. This process has been effective as a result of good multi-agency working and communication. Consistent boundaries and regular focused work have given the children and young people parameters to take well-managed risks.

Restraint has only been used in line with guidance and legislation and as part of a strategy to prevent further harm to self and others. De-escalation and calming techniques used by staff helped one young person to feel safe and protected. The young person was more able to share her anxieties in a more constructive way.

Children and young people are protected by good staffing ratios, and by staff who understand the children and young people very well. Missing from care protocols and procedures are followed rigorously and staff routinely follow children and young people when they go missing, search known areas and visit known associates. Return home interviews have taken place in all instances. A police officer commented: 'Staff were extremely proactive in looking for [name of child]. They kept in regular contact with the local authority and the police during his missing episodes, which allowed for the cross flow of information to be shared.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is highly effective in her management of the home. She is supported by a competent deputy manager and they work well as a team. The manager is suitably qualified and has recently completed her level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

The manager has high aspirations for the children and young people to achieve well, whatever their ability and the choices they make. This has seen children and young people thrive and make progress at their own pace. Her commitment to providing a nurturing and homely environment 'rubs off' on staff. A young person commented: 'This has been the best place I have ever lived at. It was like being part of a family. All the staff were amazing, and I have lots of fond memories.'

The longevity and stability of the staff team is a major factor in the quality of care and outcomes for the children and young people. Staff members reported how well supported they feel by the manager and deputy manager. Regular supervision sessions, annual appraisals and training ensure that they remain skilled to fulfil their roles.

The manager disseminates additional learning dependent on the needs of the children and young people resident in the home. She is diligent and rigorous in completing shared living assessments to ensure that children and young people are appropriately matched and their risks are clearly understood prior to placement.

Sound and comprehensive auditing systems underpin the quality of practice in the home. Feedback from stakeholders, professionals, families and the children and young people is used purposefully and productively to enhance and adapt to the ever-changing environment.

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: SC471178

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: Jill Firth

Inspector

Cath Sikakana: social care inspector

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