

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	25/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC471178
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 Whittaker
Registered manager	Stacy Cooper
Inspector	Debbie Foster

Inspection date	25/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC471178

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Staff have high aspirations for young people. They strongly advocate and believe in them, providing them with an exceedingly nurturing environment in which they can flourish.
- Staff work extensively with other professionals to attain the very best support, advice and guidance to ensure young people have the greatest opportunity to succeed.
- Staff have a great knowledge and understanding of child trauma, neglect and attachment deficits. This ensures the care they provide is individually tailored to meet the specific needs of each young person.
- Staff work tirelessly and endeavour to build the emotional resilience of young people overtime.
- All children say this is the very best home that they have lived in.
- Young people's safety is paramount and wide-ranging safeguard strategies are implemented to ensure they are protected.
- Young people have built very strong, secure and trusting relationships with staff. Young people have very good or improving education attendance.
- Young people benefit tremendously from the strong and clear leadership of the manager. She ensures her vision, nurturing approach and extensive child care knowledge cascades to all the staff team.

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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/07/2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
Young people make excellent progress as a result of the care that they receive from a proactive, nurturing and devoted staff team. A young person said, 'This is a good place to live, I know as I've lived in a number of places.' High priority is given to secure young people's current and long term good health and wellbeing. Young people prosper as a result of very good access to health services and have routine check-ups. Staff are proactive to secure health services to support emotional and psychological needs. Where there are long waiting times to access mental health services the provider has commissioned a service. This ensures young people receive a swift response to ensure that their specific and individual psychological health needs are met. Health professionals have been keenly pursued to undertake medication reviews to make certain that young people's health needs are met appropriately. The staff demonstrate a good awareness of child trauma, neglect and attachment disorders. All young people have a journey book which staff make sure is completed, with dairy entries, and memory accounts, through photos of occasions, activities and other celebrations of their life at the home. Staff seek advice from other professionals which informs the care practices that they implement for each young person. This ensures that young people are very well supported to overcome some of their presenting difficulties and build on their emotional resilience. Young people's attendance at school has significantly improved. Those who have previously had a history of non-attendance and exclusions, now regularly attend. Staff instil in young people the importance of their education; work diligently with school tutors to ensure they succeed to make learning experiences enjoyable and positive. An education professional said, 'Staff communicate with us daily, so we know how we can best support X in school.' Staff take great interest in the young people's school work, they give support with homework and attend parent's evenings. Young people are rewarded for all their effort. Staff give frequent praise to reinforce their achievements. Reading books is a regular past time for young people, with bedtime stories for younger individuals being part of their settling routine at night. This provides young people with enjoyment as well as improving their reading and English skills. Consequently, young people attainment in school improves which has a longer lasting impact on their opportunities into adulthood.	

Young people learn life and independence skills appropriate to their age and understanding. This includes, making snacks, drinks, helping to prepare meals, clean and tidy their bedrooms. Some young people are coming to an age where they are learning to travel independently on public transport. Staff support young people to promote the development of their independence skills at a realistic pace in readiness for looking after themselves as young adults.

Young people spoke with such joy about the social activities and the trips that they experience. They take part in a wide range of activities. These include, wall climbing, swimming and going to the cinema. A young person said, 'We get to do all sorts, the best thing I've done recently is wake boarding.' Another said, 'We had the best summer ever, we went to Blackpool, light water valley, on holiday, it was great. I enjoyed the Blackpool rides the best.' Staff are committed to giving young people new life experiences. This builds their self-esteem, confidence and provides opportunities to make new friendships within their own peer group.

Young people's views and opinions are listened to, within a number of forums, including daily discussions, focus sessions, reviews and young people's meetings. Young people said, 'We make loads of suggestions and staff do listen. When I first came here I was told how I can make a complaint. I haven't needed to, I just tell them if I am not happy about something and they sort it.' Young people know their views are taken on board and this empowers them and reinforces that staff value them.

Young people's contact with their families is very well supported. Staff facilitate family visits and phone calls to ensure young people identify and have a feeling of belonging with the people who are important in their lives.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Young people are safe; say they feel safe and secure. They are cared for by staff that have their safety at the heart of all that they do. Exceptionally close links with other supporting agencies are strongly embedded and further assists to keep young people safe. These links include the missing from home police officer. Staff work meticulously close with all relevant professionals to keep young people who are vulnerable and at risk to sexual exploitation safe. Incidents of young people going missing are low. Staff are diligent and follow procedures. Where possible they follow young people and they keep them in their sight. They use the strong relationships built to engage young people and to help	

them understand the dangers and the risks presented when going missing. This results in such incidents reducing or ceasing for the young people who have had a history of going missing.

The staff's overriding emphasis is to promote positive behaviour. Staff speak with pride and warmth about the young people that they care for; they focus on their positive achievements. Young people have incentives in place to support their positive behaviour. Sanctions and physical interventions are exceptionally rare. Staff use restorative justice to help young people to learn from any negative behaviour presented. This approach has successful results which supports them to achieve in self-managing their emotions and behaviour overtime.

This is further enhanced with the implementation of consistent strategies and boundaries. Young people have discussions with staff to agree the strategies which will support them to manage the behaviour. This assists them to gain skills to deal with conflict and become more emotionally resilient. A young person said, 'Staff are fair with us, I need time my own space and this helps me to calm when I get angry, staff know this.' This helps young people to management their behaviour more effectively. A social worker said, 'Staff work hard to support X complex emotional issues and challenging behaviour. The strategies used are working and support X to attend school.'

Specific and good risk management strategies ensure that young people reduce their behaviours which are of concern. Young people's vulnerabilities are kept under review to make sure the strategies used keep young people safe.

Young people live in a safe environment where checks are undertaken on all equipment which includes electric, gas, fire prevention systems and practices to ensure everyone's health and safety.

Robust recruitment and selection procedures are undertaken. These include all the necessary safeguard checks, such as DBS, full employment history and taking up references. The provider goes the extra mile to carry out further best practice safety measures. These comprise of checks on whether the applicant has had a child subject to a care order or placed on a supervision order. This ensures that young people are cared for by staff that are safe and suitable to care for them.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
The Registered Manager has a wealth of experience in working with young people	

in residential care and other settings. She has been the Registered Manager for this service since 2013 and holds a level 5 and 4 Diploma in Leadership and Management.

Young people benefit from exceptionally strong leadership from the Registered Manager. She leads by example to ensure that all staff prioritises the care needs of the young people. As a result, young people make continual progress in line with their care and support plans. There is a very strong understanding of trauma and difficult starts young people have experienced. This significantly influences the care approaches used to care and support them.

Staff receive highly effective supervision where the central focus is on their care practice. This is further enhanced with regular team meetings where discussions on the care of each young person, analysing events and practice that have taken place. As a result, agreement on the support strategies to use for each young person is determined. This is reinforced with detailed handovers and written communication systems that ensure young people receive consistent and cohesive care and support. A staff member said, 'We get really good support from the X (the manager) and X (deputy manager), they are hands on with the young people, we have a great staff team.'

Young people receive high quality care from staff that are very well trained. Staff receive a detailed induction; qualify in Level 3 Diploma in Caring for Children and Young people and mandatory training. This is further enhanced by more specialist training such as Autism, child sexual exploitation and foetal alcohol syndrome. Staff have recently refreshed training in attachment disorder, to concentrate their attention on the specific and particular needs of the young people in their care.

Professionals report that there is excellent collaborative working. The staff communication is consistently high to ensure all those working with young people can support them in the best way possible. A social worker said, 'I'm very impressed with the home; they are the best I work with. I get frequent and consistent feedback. No matter which staff I speak to I get clear and accurate information. This is backed up with a weekly update and regular emails.'

The manager is clear on the strengths and weaknesses of the home and is proactive to address any shortfalls. She has an array of audits and monitoring systems along with a noticeable presence working alongside staff. This ensures she has a very clear perspective on the care delivered to young people. This enables her to make changes to further improve the quality of care delivered.

External monitoring is robust and identifies where additional improvements to the service can be made. This provides the manager with a critical eye which extends safeguards and scrutinises the quality of care provided to young people.

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 looked after children 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 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 who 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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