

**DUNDEE CITY COUNCIL**

**REPORT TO: CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICES COMMITTEE – 26 SEPTEMBER 2016**

**REPORT ON: HOUSING SUPPORT SERVICE INSPECTION REPORT ON THROUGH-CARE AND AFTERCARE TEAM**

**REPORT BY: EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN AND FAMILIES SERVICE**

**REPORT NO: 301-2016**

**1.0 PURPOSE OF REPORT**

This report advises Committee of the outcome of the inspection on the Throughcare and Aftercare Team undertaken by the Care Inspectorate in December 2015, with a report published in March 2016 (Appendix 1). It also advises Committee of the proposed actions by the Throughcare and Aftercare Team in relation to recommendations arising from this inspection.

**2.0 RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that the Committee:

- 2.1 Notes the contents of the inspection report (Appendix 1); and
- 2.2 Notes the actions to be taken to address the recommendations.

**3.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**4.0 MAIN TEXT**

- 4.1 Throughcare is the provision of support to help Looked After Children prepare for the time when they leave care and Aftercare is the provision of advice, guidance and practical support for Care leavers. The Care Inspectorate undertook an unannounced, low intensity inspection of the Throughcare and Aftercare Team between 17 and 23 December 2015.

- 4.2 The Service achieved the following grades

<b>Date</b>	<b>Quality of Care and Support</b>	<b>Quality of Environment</b>	<b>Quality of Staffing</b>	<b>Quality of Management and Leadership</b>
17 March 2016	4 – Good	Not assessed	5 – Very Good	3 -Adequate

- 4.3 In terms of the process of the inspection, the Inspectors met with the Team Manager and Service Manager, with two staff members and three young people, currently using the Service. The inspectors also considered Care Standards questionnaires completed by two young people and a sample of support plans, supervision records, exit interview records, team meeting minutes and they looked at team development information, information about a bid to the Life Changes Trust and information leaflets available to professionals and young people. The Inspectors also received a self- assessment.

- 4.4 The Quality of care and Support was rated as good. (Service user participation) Young people who used the service were closely involved in the development and review of their Pathways Plans. The plans were found to be individualised and reflected the views and aspirations of the young people. The team had made very good use of social media to establish and maintain links with young people, including a regularly used Facebook page, for both public and private communication. The service had a well-established system for gathering views of young people who were leaving the service. The team was found to be responsive to the needs of young people, for example a group was set up to provide support to young mums, while another group looked at the needs of first time tenants. Young people were also involved in a review of the Pathways process and were involved in interviews to recruit staff. Young people also had a strategic voice through the Champions Board.
- 4.5 The young people were very positive about the service. A sample of their views expressed in the Inspection Report are:
- "I have had a lot of support in finding and setting up my flat. The starter pack was great. They have really encouraged me with cooking for myself."
- "My life would be so different if I didn't have the support from here. It may be a dull building but on the inside it's shining because of the staff."
- "I have never been made to feel stupid or embarrassed - they are constantly supportive."
- "It had been great for me. I would definitely say it was a six [excellent]. My accommodation is ideal."
- "They don't give up on you."
- "I am over the moon with my life so far."
- 4.6 QThe Inspectors found that the Through Care and Aftercare Service had well established links with partner agencies, which was instrumental in supporting young people to access the services needed to enable them to lead an independent lifestyle. Partnership with Housing providers was positive and all young people interviewed were happy with the quality of the accommodation they had been helped secure. The team also provided essential financial and practical support which enabled young people to furnish their accommodation to a decent standard. They also provided support for them to develop independent living skills and to become responsible and respected tenants. The Team also had well established links with local colleges and a very good understanding of routes into academic study. The Team provided flexible financial support to young people continuing in education. The team also encouraged young people to live healthier lifestyle, with guidance about eating well ,links to NHS staff and links to activities such as street soccer and Ice Hockey.
- 4.7 The quality of staffing was rated as very good. Young people were involved in recruitment of staff. The staff team was described as well qualified and experienced and drawn from a range of professional backgrounds, bringing a diversity of skills which benefitted young people. In the last year staff had attended training in Child Sexual Exploitation. Risk assessment, Growth Mindset, Legal Highs (NPS), Attachment training, Data protection and Welfare Reform. The team also had established links to STAF (Scottish Throughcare and aftercare Forum) and with CELCIS (Centre for excellence for Looked after Children). These links to similar teams throughout Scotland had been particularly helpful as all teams prepared for the implementation of the Children and Young Person (Scotland ) Act 2014, which added considerable extra duties to Aftercare teams. The Team spoke positively about their training opportunities and the Team Manager who came into post in October 2015, had drawn up a training plan and brought experience as a trainer himself. All of the staff spoken to felt well supported by their manager and their team colleagues. There were no recommendations made regarding quality of staffing.
- 4.8 The quality of management and leadership was rated as adequate. The inspectors found that there had been a period of instability at management level over the last two years . During

this time the team had been well supported by short term managers but had also demonstrated a high level of self-directed activity aimed at maintaining a high quality of service to young people. A Team development day had been held and team members took on board responsibility for following up the agreed development actions. The line management structure was linked into the local authority's Corporate Parenting Board (Looked After Children Strategic Planning Group) and the Service Manager had contributed to a recent successful bid for Life Changes Trust funds to establish a Care leaver co-ordinator post and a participation assistant post, aimed at improving multi-agency co-ordination of services and further developing ways of encouraging young people's participation. The new Team manager had three years recent experience with the Scottish Government and this was seen to provide an opportunity to move forward with a more integrated approach to providing services.

- 4.9 Inspectors found that the changes in the management of this Team over the past two years did not have a negative impact on the quality of service delivered to young people. The Inspectors found that the frequent changes in management had hampered the development of a co-ordinated approach to quality assurance and strategic planning. Their position was that to support continued improvement, the organisation should make every effort to consolidate the management of the service.

## **5.0 ACTIONS IN RELATION TO RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 5.1 The inspectors made the following recommendations:

1. The service should consider how it can make best use of the feedback gathered from service users as part of the exit interview process
2. The service should develop a systematic approach to evaluating the impact of the service on the experience of, and outcomes for, service users, taking into account information gathered from young people, staff and key stakeholders.
3. The service should ensure that it implements robust systems for ensuring that the quality of the service is monitored and developed.

- 5.2 The information from exit interviews will be collated and analysed within a section within an annual report that will be produced every March. The Annual report will be produced by the Team Manager and will be presented to the Looked After Children Strategic Planning Group (LAC SPG) and the Children and Families Extended Management Team.

- 5.3 The Service is developing stronger links between the Pathways plans and the Child's Plans that every young person has when Looked After - GIRFEC Outcome Wheels completed as part of their assessment, will be completed by Throughcare staff and progress measured against SHANARRI headings (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active respected, responsible, included) - this will inform individual progress but also be collated to identify trends.

5.4 The service is part of the case file audit system and the service was part of the 2015 Care inspectorate Inspection of Integrated Children's Services. This includes Inspection of Throughcare case files, a focus group of staff and a focus group of care leavers. The Service will complete its own audit of case files and set out the findings within each Annual Report.

## **6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 This Report has been screened for any policy implications in respect of Sustainability, Strategic Environmental Assessment, Anti-Poverty, Equality Impact Assessment and Risk Management. No major concerns were found.

## **7.0 CONSULTATIONS**

7.1 The Chief Executive, Executive Director of Corporate Services and Head of Democratic and Legal Services were consulted in the preparation of this report.

## **8.0 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

8.1 None.

Michael Wood  
Executive Director of Children and Families Service

September 2016

# Care service inspection report

Full inspection

## **Dundee City Council - Throughcare & Aftercare Service** Housing Support Service

Linlathen Resource Centre  
1 Rowantree Crescent  
Dundee

Service provided by: Dundee City Council

Service provider number: SP2003004034

Care service number: CS2004079338

Inspection Visit Type: Unannounced

Care services in Scotland cannot operate unless they are registered with the Care Inspectorate. We inspect, award grades and set out improvements that must be made. We also investigate complaints about care services and take action when things aren't good enough.

Please get in touch with us if you would like more information or have any concerns about a care service.

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## Summary

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change after this inspection following other regulatory activity. For example, if we have to take enforcement action to make the service improve, or if we investigate and agree with a complaint someone makes about the service.

### We gave the service these grades

Quality of care and support	4	Good
Quality of staffing	5	Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	3	Adequate

### What the service does well

The service works effectively with young people to provide the support they need to help them to make the transition into living more independently.

Staff form positive relationships with young people and offer them a range of practical and emotional support to enable them to find and maintain appropriate accommodation.

The service has very good links with a wide range of agencies and organisations, including health and housing services and education and employment providers, and they use these links to good effect to help young people to overcome difficulties and reach their potential.

### What the service could do better

To support the continued improvement, the organisation should make every effort to consolidate the management of this service.

The service should make much better use of the range of information available from young people, staff and service users to evaluate the quality of the service and its impact on outcomes for service users.

It should also make sure that internal quality assurance systems are regularly implemented to monitor and develop the quality of the service.

### **What the service has done since the last inspection**

The service has continued to deliver high quality individualised support to young people.

It has developed its use of social media to enable young people to easily access the service.

In partnership with Dundee City Council's Champions Board, it has contributed to the development of corporate services to support care experienced young people.

### **Conclusion**

Dundee City Council's Throughcare and Aftercare Service offers effective individualised support to young people who are or have previously been looked after by the local authority to help them to move towards living more independently.

The skilled and committed staff team work effectively with partner agencies to help young people to identify and overcome the challenges they face in making the transition to living independently.

The service should continue to evaluate its quality and its impact on outcomes for young people, taking into account the areas for improvement identified in this report.

## 1 About the service we inspected

Dundee City Council provides this throughcare and aftercare service to young people who are or who have previously been looked after by the local authority.

Throughcare is the process by which the local authority plans and prepares for young people leaving care and aftercare is the provision of advice, guidance and assistance for young people who are no longer looked after.

The team works with young people to provide assessment, planning and support tailored to meet each individual young people's needs.

The service works in partnership with Carolina House Trust which provides tenancy support to young people.

The service also works closely with the housing department and local housing providers to help young people to secure appropriate tenancies.

It also works in partnership with providers of training and employment opportunities and with health and support agencies to help to meet the needs of young people.

The number of service users is variable but the service works with around 90-100 young people at any one time.

This service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services is available on our website at [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

### Recommendations

A recommendation is a statement that sets out actions that a care service provider should take to improve or develop the quality of the service, but where failure to do so would not directly result in enforcement.

Recommendations are based on the National Care Standards, SSSC codes of practice and recognised good practice. These must also be outcomes-based and if the provider meets the recommendation this would improve outcomes for people receiving the service.

### Requirements

A requirement is a statement which sets out what a care service must do to improve outcomes for people who use services and must be linked to a breach in the Public Services Reform (Scotland) Act 2010 (the "Act"), its regulations, or orders made under the Act, or a condition of registration. Requirements are enforceable in law.

We make requirements where (a) there is evidence of poor outcomes for people using the service or (b) there is the potential for poor outcomes which would affect people's health, safety or welfare.

Based on the findings of this inspection this service has been awarded the following grades:

**Quality of care and support - Grade 4 - Good**

**Quality of staffing - Grade 5 - Very Good**

**Quality of management and leadership - Grade 3 - Adequate**

This report and grades represent our assessment of the quality of the areas of performance which were examined during this inspection.

Grades for this care service may change following other regulatory activity. You can find the most up-to-date grades for this service by visiting our website [www.careinspectorate.com](http://www.careinspectorate.com) or by calling us on 0345 600 9527 or visiting one of our offices.

## 2 How we inspected this service

### The level of inspection we carried out

In this service we carried out a low intensity inspection. We carry out these inspections when we are satisfied that services are working hard to provide consistently high standards of care.

### What we did during the inspection

We wrote this report following an unannounced inspection of the service which took place in December 2015. We made an unannounced visit to the service on 17 December 2015 when we met with the manager and we planned the inspection for 22 and 23 December 2015 to give us the best opportunity to meet with young people who use the service.

Before the inspection, the service had submitted a self assessment form as requested by the Care Inspectorate.

We sent out 15 Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs) to young people who use the service, of which two were completed and returned.

During the inspection, we gathered information from a range of sources, including:

Discussions with:

- the manager and external manager of the service
- two members of the staff team
- three young people who were currently using the service.

We also looked at a range of documents, including:

- sample of support plans
- sample of exit interview records and analysis report
- information leaflet and fact sheets
- sample of supervision records
- team development information

- team meeting minutes
- presentation about the Care Leavers Covenant
- charity bid for Champions Board.

Following the inspection we received some additional information from the service which we took into account when evaluating the Quality Statements.

There was a delay in completing the inspection due to the inspector's absence and time allowed for the service to submit additional information which was received on 17 March 2016. We therefore noted this as the completion date for the inspection.

### **Grading the service against quality themes and statements**

We inspect and grade elements of care that we call 'quality themes'. For example, one of the quality themes we might look at is 'Quality of care and support'. Under each quality theme are 'quality statements' which describe what a service should be doing well for that theme. We grade how the service performs against the quality themes and statements.

Details of what we found are in Section 3: The inspection

### **Inspection Focus Areas (IFAs)**

In any year we may decide on specific aspects of care to focus on during our inspections. These are extra checks we make on top of all the normal ones we make during inspection. We do this to gather information about the quality of these aspects of care on a national basis. Where we have examined an inspection focus area we will clearly identify it under the relevant quality statement.

### **Fire safety issues**

We do not regulate fire safety. Local fire and rescue services are responsible for checking services. However, where significant fire safety issues become apparent, we will alert the relevant fire and rescue services so they may consider what action to take. You can find out more about care services' responsibilities for fire safety at [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

### **The annual return**

Every year all care services must complete an 'annual return' form to make sure the information we hold is up to date. We also use annual returns to decide how we will inspect the service.

**Annual Return Received:** No

### **Comments on Self Assessment**

Every year all care services must complete a 'self assessment' form telling us how their service is performing. We check to make sure this assessment is accurate.

The service submitted a completed self assessment report within the required timescales. The self assessment included some relevant information about the identified strengths and areas for development. However, some of the information contained in the self assessment form was out-of-date. For future inspections, the service provider should ensure that only current, relevant information is included and sources of evidence of service strengths are clearly noted.

### **Taking the views of people using the care service into account**

We received two completed CSQs from young people who used the service. Both indicated that they were happy with the quality of the service and both 'strongly agreed' that staff treated them with respect and had the skills they required to support them.

One young person commented: "I have always felt confident that my worker would support me at all times."

We also met with three young people during the inspection, all of whom expressed a very positive view of the service. It was clear that the quality of the relationship with their support worker was of central importance. They also valued practical advice and support in finding and maintaining suitable

accommodation and also in accessing employment and education/training opportunities.

Some of the comments young people made included:

- "I have had a lot of support in finding and setting up my flat. The starter pack was great. They have really encouraged me with cooking for myself."
- "My life would be so different if I didn't have the support from here. It may be a dull building but on the inside it's shining because of the staff."
- "I have never been made to feel stupid or embarrassed - they are constantly supportive."
- "It had been great for me. I would definitely say it was a six [excellent]. My accommodation is ideal."
- "They don't give up on you."
- "I am over the moon with my life so far."

### **Taking carers' views into account**

We did not have the opportunity to speak with carers during this inspection.

### 3 The inspection

We looked at how the service performs against the following quality themes and statements. Here are the details of what we found.

#### Quality Theme 1: Quality of Care and Support

Grade awarded for this theme: 4 - Good

##### Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of the care and support provided by the service."

##### Service Strengths

We decided to look at this statement as it is important to know how well the service involves young people in discussions about their own support plans and also in the development of the wider service. From our discussions with service users and staff and from looking at relevant documents, we noted the following strengths:

Young people who used the service were closely involved in the development and review of their Pathways Plans. These plans set out areas in which young people needed support (including help with managing finances, housing, training/employment, social opportunities) and prioritised these in line with young people's needs. We looked at a sample of these plans and found that they were individualised and reflected the views and aspirations of the young people who used the service. The young people we spoke with during the inspection confirmed that they had been consulted about all aspects of the plans. One young person told us that she had always been at the centre of any discussions about her support plan. She said "My support worker always respected my decisions. Even if she had a different opinion, she never made me feel stupid or embarrassed and would always talk things through."

Young people were provided with information about the service and what they could expect in terms of support in a variety of ways. The team had produced an informative leaflet which outlined the process of referral and the range of services available. Given the age range of the service user group, the team had made very good use of social media to establish and maintain links with young people, including a Facebook page which shared important information with young people. This also enabled young people to contact the team directly and to receive a speedy response. In addition, an emergency mobile phone number enables young people to contact the team in an emergency. The service has taken appropriate steps to ensure that young people's privacy, dignity and confidentiality is safeguarded when using electronic methods of communication.

The service had a well established system for gathering the views of young people who were leaving the service. An independent review officer from a separate organisation conducted in-depth exit interviews which explored young people's experiences of the service and the impact it had had on their lives. A recent analysis of the exit interviews provided a rich source of information about the challenges facing young people as they left the care system and the extent to which they felt supported and enabled by the service to meet these. The report showed a generally very positive view of the service by young people who engaged in the exit interview process and also identified some suggestions and recommendations for improvement.

The team was responsive to the needs of young people who used the service. For example, a group was currently being set up by the team to provide advice, information and support for new and prospective young mums. While another group looking at the particular issues facing first time tenants had been developed by the team. In this way, the needs of young people had directly influenced the development of some aspects of the service and enhanced the quality of the support which was available to them.

The service also involved young people in directly improving the quality of the service in the following ways:

- Some of the young people who were using or had used the service had been involved in a comprehensive review of the Pathways planning materials, thereby

contributing their valuable experience to helping to develop a system which would better meet the needs of young care leavers.

- Young service users had been involved in devising questions and participating in staff interviews, thereby bringing an important service user-focus to the recruitment and selection of staff.

- More widely, young people who had used the service had been encouraged and supported to participate in Dundee City Council's Champions Board which included care experienced young people working in partnership with the Council's chief executive and heads of service, developing improved services for young people across the city.

Overall, we found that the service was committed to meaningfully involving young people in assessing and improving the quality of the service in a number of ways. There was good evidence to show that this had led to positive outcomes for young people in terms of their individual care plans, the development of the service and the development of policy and practice across the city.

### **Areas for improvement**

As noted above, the service had in place a system for seeking information about the experiences of young people who had used the service through structured exit interviews. This was supported by an experienced review officer from an independent organisation and provided valuable information which could be used to shape the service in the future and also to contribute to wider discussion about the experience of young people leaving care. However, the service had not made best use of this rich source of information and had not responded in any structured way to the recommendations and suggestions which had been made (**see Recommendation 1**).

**Grade**

4 - Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Recommendations**

**Number of recommendations - 1**

1. The service should consider how it can make best use of the feedback gathered from service users as part of the exit interview process.

**National Care Standards, Housing Support Services - Standard 3: Management and Staffing Arrangements; and Standard 8: Expressing Your Views.**

**Statement 2**

"We enable service users to make individual choices and ensure that every service user can be supported to achieve their potential."

**Service Strengths**

We decided to look at this statement as it allows us to consider how the service helps young people to make positive choices and to fulfil their potential. From our discussions with the young people who used the service and from looking at support plans, we noted the following strengths:

As described under Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1, staff worked closely with young people to develop support plans which reflected their needs and priorities. Although individualised, the support plans were all aimed at helping young people to put in place and maintain the key elements of a successful independent lifestyle, including:

- securing suitable housing and furnishing it appropriately
- learning how to manage a tenancy
- sorting out benefits and managing a budget
- seeking appropriate training and employment opportunities

- looking after their health and developing a healthier lifestyle
- building social routines and constructive leisure activities.

The throughcare and aftercare service had well established links with partner agencies which was instrumental in supporting young people to access the services they needed to enable them to lead an independent lifestyle. Central to this was very good partnership working with housing providers, including both the local authority's housing department and third sector providers. As key partners in Dundee City Council's Champions Board and Young People's Participation Group (YPPG), the service had helped to bring about changes in policy which had improved young people's access to suitable tenancies.

All of the young people we spoke to were very happy with the quality of the accommodation they had been helped to secure. Though all in very different circumstances, each had accommodation in which they were happy and which met their needs.

The team also provided essential financial and practical support which enabled young people to furnish their accommodation to a decent standard. They also provided support for them to develop independent living skills and to become responsible and respected tenants.

Support workers provided young people with practical support and motivation to find employment or suitable training opportunities. They helped young people to develop CVs and write application forms. The team had a very good working knowledge of local agencies which provided training and employability schemes and helped to direct young people towards the agencies which would best meet their needs and aspirations. They also had well established links with local colleges and a very good understanding of routes into academic study. For example, one young person had been helped to apply for a summer school scheme and was now attending university on a full-time basis. As well as benefitting from the team's knowledge and contacts, it was clear that support workers helped to inspire and motivate young people on a personal level to work towards achieving their own individual goals.

To support young people to undertake academic study or apprenticeships, the service was able to provide flexible financial support. For example, in the form

of course fees, extra tuition and the provision of laptops or other relevant resources. For some young people, this kind of investment helped to increase their life-long employment opportunities.

The service also supported young people to improve their physical and mental health and wellbeing, through established links with the dedicated nurse for looked after and accommodated children/young people (the LAAC nurse) and also by signposting to relevant health support agencies. Support staff would accompany young people to medical appointments if needed.

In addition, the service also encouraged young people to lead a healthier lifestyle, both through the provision of advice and guidance about eating well on a budget and through promoting access to activities which would help to improve physical health and fitness. Recent initiatives included the development of links with Dundee Ice Hockey team which provided opportunities for spectators and players and involvement in a street soccer project. Both of these initiatives provided young people with opportunities to participate in constructive leisure activities and to develop social contacts, as well as to keep fit and have fun.

Clearly, for each young person, the nature of the support required depended on their individual circumstances. However, from our discussions with the young people we met during the inspection and from looking at a sample of support plans, we identified these positive outcomes:

- One young person had been helped to find a good flat and had furnished it with a starter pack provided by the service. He felt that he had been helped to make "the right decisions" about the flat and the furnishing of it. As part of the support he received to learn how to shop and cook healthily on a budget, he had developed an interest in cooking and was now actively seeking employment in the catering industry. He described how he had been helped practically to look for jobs and training opportunities and how he had been encouraged in his efforts by his support worker. Alongside this, he had benefitted from attending some sporting events and was now considering taking up an opportunity to go on a residential outdoor activity course. Overall, he felt that the service had helped him to make progress in all the important areas of his life.

- Another young person had been encouraged and supported to find and attend a suitable college course. She had received financial support in the form of bus fares and the provision of a laptop. In addition, she had had a tutor to help with some specific study issues. All of these supports had helped the young person to achieve academic qualifications and she was about to consolidate this with further education. She was clear that none of this would have been possible without the support of the service and her carer. She told us: "My life would have been so different if I hadn't had the support from here."

- Another young person had benefitted from support to get into supported accommodation and to furnish this to a very good standard. She told us that budgeting had been a real challenge for her but that she was now managing this well. She acknowledged that she hadn't always been the most co-operative person to work with but she told us that "They don't give up on you" and she was now in a much more stable position than she had ever been. She told us: "I'm over the moon with how my life is now. I would definitely say that this is an excellent service."

What was apparent in talking to young people was that they not only benefitted from practical advice and support but they also felt that staff genuinely cared about them and were prepared to listen to and help resolve emotional issues. For young people who had little else in the way of family support, the support and reassurance of an interested adult was a really important element of the service they received.

### **Areas for improvement**

There was ample evidence to show young people who engaged with the service were supported to make positive choices and to fulfil their potential. For further improvement, the service should continue to develop creative approaches to trying to involve young people who are reluctant to engage in the many positive opportunities offered by the team.

**Grade**

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

## Quality Theme 3: Quality of Staffing

Grade awarded for this theme: 5 - Very Good

### Statement 1

"We ensure that service users and carers participate in assessing and improving the quality of staffing in the service."

#### Service Strengths

We decided to look at this statement as it is important to know how well the service performs in the development of quality of the wider service. Information about the ways in which the service does this is detailed under Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1.

With specific reference to how the service involves young people in assessing and improving the quality of staffing within the service, we found the following strengths:

- The service had a well established system of involving young people directly in the recruitment and selection of staff, both in terms of devising questions (with the help of an independent advocate) and in participating in the interviews, again with support. This is an important strength as it helps to maintain the focus of the selection process on the needs of service users. It also provides young people with opportunities to develop skills and self confidence. In discussion with a recently recruited member of staff, they confirmed that they had found this a challenging and relevant part of the selection process.
- There was evidence that the service considered the needs of service users when allocating support workers. They also have taken feedback from young people into account when considering staff performance issues. Again, this suggests that the service welcomes and respects young people's views and uses their perspective to improve the service.

**Areas for improvement**

The service should continue to develop the involvement of young people in the evaluation of staffing within the service.

**Grade**

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

**Statement 3**

"We have a professional, trained and motivated workforce which operates to National Care Standards, legislation and best practice."

**Service Strengths**

We decided to look at this statement as it allows us to look at the quality of the workforce, the systems in place to support and develop staff skills and the impact of the staff on the quality of the service. From our discussions with the manager, staff and young people and from looking at a range of documents, including staff training, supervision records and team meeting minutes, we noted the following strengths:

The staff team is well qualified and experienced and drawn from a range of professional backgrounds, bringing a diversity of skills which benefitted young people.

Staff were provided with a range of relevant training to support their work with young people. During the past year, staff had covered the following issues:

- Child sexual exploitation (CSE) - one of the team members is a trainer and is part of the local authority team that delivers the CSE training.
- Risk assessment training - team input on assessing the risk of reoffending.
- Growth Mindset training.

- New psychoactive substance (NPS) training.
- Centre for Excellence for Looked After Children in Scotland (CELCIS) training on the implications of Sections 9, 10 and 11 of the Children and Young Person (Scotland) Act 2014.
- Attachment-Based Practice training.
- Data protection and management.
- Welfare reform.
- Personal safety and poverty.

In addition, Dundee City Council are corporate members of the Scottish Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF) and all team members attended two STAF practitioners forums and the STAF annual conference in 2015. Through this, the team maintained an up-to-date knowledge of current issues concerning young care leavers and contributed to the national debate about how recent changes in legislation will impact on the experience of young service users.

In discussion, staff told us that the organisation supported the development of a learning culture and, wherever possible, training and development initiatives were supported and facilitated.

The recently appointed team manager had drawn up a staff training plan which set out priorities for staff training for the coming year. His status as an accredited trainer in the delivery of asset risk assessment, Safer Lives Model, risk management planning, and mental health screening is clearly of relevance to the team and there are plans to deliver this training to the throughcare and aftercare team plus other interested workers throughout the sector.

Regular team meetings provided opportunities for discussion of practice issues and also allowed for the development of a shared knowledge of young people's circumstances. This helped to ensure that young people using the service

received a consistent response from other members of the team if their own support worker wasn't immediately available.

The team had also had a development day which had focussed on a critical evaluation of their practice and from which they had produced an action plan to take forward identified priorities. Despite the absence of a permanent manager for more than two years, the team had been successful in taking forward a number of initiatives to enhance the service offered to young people.

All of the staff we spoke to felt well supported by their manager and their team colleagues. A number of staff mentioned that there had been a greater emphasis on developing a team approach over the past year.

The young person's relationship with their support worker was a really important part of their support. As noted under the section 'Taking the views of service users into account', young people expressed a very positive view of the staff team. Some of the things they said about staff included:

- "I have always felt confident that my worker would support me at all times."
- "My life would be so different if I didn't have the support from here. It may be a dull building but on the inside it's shining because of the staff."
- "I have never been made to feel stupid or embarrassed - they are constantly supportive."
- "They don't give up on you."

### **Areas for improvement**

Now that the new manager is in post, the service should ensure that all staff receive regular one-to-one supervision and appraisal in line with the local authority's policy.

**Grade**

5 - Very Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

## Quality Theme 4: Quality of Management and Leadership

Grade awarded for this theme: 3 - Adequate

### Statement 3

"To encourage good quality care, we promote leadership values throughout the workforce."

#### Service Strengths

We decided to look at this statement as we haven't looked at it for some time. From our discussions with the manager and staff and from looking at range of relevant documents, we noted the following strengths:

There had been a period of instability at management level within the team over the past two years. During this time, the team had been well supported by a series of short-term managers but had also demonstrated a high level of self directed activity aimed at maintaining a high quality of service to young people.

Team-led initiatives were encouraged and supported. The team had contributed to an evaluation of their practice at a team development day. From this, a number of actions had been identified, including the development of a young mum's group and a pre-tenancy preparation group, both of which were in the process of planning and implementation. In each of these, a member of the team took lead responsibility for taking the initiative forward.

The introduction of new staff members to the team had enabled the service to develop its links with community-based services and had resulted in more young people getting involved in sports activities through the Street Soccer initiative and participation in ice hockey events. For one young person we spoke to, this had been of particular benefit.

Team meeting minutes showed that individual team members took on board responsibility for raising practice and procedural issues and for following them

through to resolution. There was also good evidence to show that the team had pulled together to cover meetings and liaison roles, including representation on external groups in the absence of a permanent manager.

The team contributes to national debate through the corporate membership of the STAF. One team member is undertaking the Leadership Matters training programme through the forum, contributing to the development of leadership within the team with a focus on the challenges facing care leavers.

### Areas for improvement

Given the experience within the team, the service should ensure that leadership values continue to be promoted across the team. In doing so, the service should take into account the Scottish Social Services Council's (SSSC) Step into Leadership programme.

### Grade

4 - Good

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Number of recommendations - 0**

### Statement 4

"We use quality assurance systems and processes which involve service users, carers, staff and stakeholders to assess the quality of service we provide"

### Service Strengths

We decided to look at this statement because the implementation of robust quality assurance systems is essential to the provision of a high quality service. From our discussions with the recently appointed manager, staff team and the external manager, from examination of relevant documents and from our observations during the inspection, we noted the following strengths:

The service was committed to seeking feedback from young people, staff and other stakeholders and using this information to develop the service. There

were also a number of internal quality assurance systems which helped to monitor and develop the quality of the service.

As described under Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1, the service had established an arm's-length review and evaluation system which was carried out by a review officer from an independent organisation. Some information had been used to evaluate and improve the service (however, see comments and recommendation under Quality Theme 1 - Statement 1). The involvement of an independent person in seeking feedback is good practice and helps to encourage a more transparent approach with open and honest recording of young people's views.

The staff team had been involved in reviewing and evaluating their practice through a team development day and at team meetings. This had led to a number of developments in the team's approach to working with young people.

The service had well established links with other agencies who provided services to young people, including housing providers in both the local authority and voluntary sectors, colleges, employment and training providers, and healthcare agencies. The team adopted a partnership approach which helped to ensure that young people were supported to access the resources which was most appropriate to them.

Within the service, practice was monitored through support plan audits, externally chaired reviews and regular supervision.

Through the line management structure, with the external line manager being also chair of the Care Leavers sub-group of the local authority's Corporate Parenting Board, the service represents the position of service users in a city-wide forum which has achieved a number of improvements for young people leaving care, particularly in relation to facilitating, accessing and maintaining suitable tenancies. The manager and external manager had also contributed substantially to a recent successful bid for Life Changes Trust funds which will result in the establishment of a care leavers co-ordinator post to improve multi-agency co-ordination of services for care leavers and also a participation assistant post with the aim of further developing ways of enabling care experienced young people in developing plans.

Through active participation in the STAF, the team kept up-to-date with current developments in legislation, policy and practice and as a result ensured that young people were advised of their rights. This was of particular importance in the light of recent legislative changes relevant to care experienced young people.

This appears to be due to the recently appointed manager has considerable experience in the management and development of services for young people within the local authority and with policy development within the Scottish Government. This should enable the team to move forward with a more integrated approach to providing services.

### Areas for improvement

Although there had been considerable upheaval in the management of this team over the past two plus years, we did not find that there had been a substantial negative impact on the quality of the service delivered to young people, as reflected in the 'Good' and 'Very Good' grades given for statements under Quality Theme 1 (quality of care and support).

However, there had been little progress made towards a systematic evaluation of the quality of the service.

The service has at its disposal a wide-range of information from service users, staff and other stakeholders. It now needs to use this information to identify and evaluate the impact of the service on the experience and outcomes for service users (**see Recommendation 1**).

In addition, the service should ensure that internal quality assurance systems, including file audits, supervision and staff appraisal are systematically implemented and used to identify and address quality issues (**see Recommendation 2**).

These issues were highlighted for improvement at the last inspection of this service in 2013. At this inspection, we did not find that there had been any noticeable progress made.

On this basis, we have given a grade of 3 - Adequate for this statement.

The frequent changes in management have hampered the development of a co-ordinated approach to quality assurance and strategic planning. To support continued improvement, the organisation should make every effort to consolidate the management of this service.

**Grade**

3 - Adequate

**Number of requirements - 0**

**Recommendations**

**Number of recommendations - 2**

1. The service should develop a systematic approach to evaluating the impact of the service on the experience of, and outcomes for, service users, taking into account information gathered from young people, staff and key stakeholders.

**National Care Standards, Housing Support Services - Standard 3:  
Management and Staffing Arrangements.**

2. The service should ensure that it implements robust systems for ensuring that the quality of the service is monitored and developed.

**National Care Standards - Housing Support Services - Standard 3:  
Management and Staffing Arrangements.**

## 4 What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at our last inspection

**Previous requirements**

There are no outstanding requirements.

## 5 What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at our last inspection

### Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

## 6 Complaints

No complaints have been upheld, or partially upheld, since the last inspection.

## 7 Enforcements

We have taken no enforcement action against this care service since the last inspection.

## 8 Additional Information

There is no additional information.

## 9 Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gratings	
26 Sep 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment	5 - Very Good Not Assessed

		Staffing Management and Leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good
1 May 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 5 - Very Good
19 Jun 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and Leadership	5 - Very Good Not Assessed 5 - Very Good 5 - Very Good

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