

A.S.I.S.T. Housing Support Service

Park Lane house
47 Broad street, Bridgeton
Suite 314 - 315
Glasgow
G40 2QR

Telephone: 01414 236 777

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Unannounced

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Service provided by:
The Mungo Foundation

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About the service

A.S.I.S.T. is an outreach housing support service supporting young people aged 16-25 years across the city of Glasgow, who are care experienced or homeless.

The aims and objectives of the service state: 'The staff at A.S.I.S.T. Project believe that everyone, regardless of ability, has the right to their own home and to be part of the community that they live in. On that basis, A.S.I.S.T. Project strives to provide the following: appropriate, targeted support from staff who have appropriate skills, knowledge and training, and who understand the needs and rights of the people they support. Local community links enable the people whom we support to live and participate in their community with their family and friends.'

At the time of inspection, the service was supporting 58 young people across the city.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 7 and 8 March 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate.

To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service, and intelligence gathered since the last inspection.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with four people using the service
- spoke with four staff and management
- reviewed documents
- spoke with external professionals.

Key messages

- People using the A.S.I.S.T. service benefit from compassionate and encouraging relationships with a committed and knowledgeable staff team.
- An individualised approach is taken to support planning, and people are recognised as experts in their own experiences and needs.
- People are treated with dignity, and feel listened to and respected.
- Where people wish to have support to access employment, education or health services, the staff work alongside other agencies to help ensure young people get the most out of life.
- The service has clear processes in place for internal and external audit and quality assurance, which ensures a consistent level of support is offered to all people.
- Personal plans are reviewed, but the service needs to ensure that young people are fully involved in review and evaluation of their care and support.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good

Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided and how these supported positive outcomes for people, therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

People using the A.S.I.S.T. service benefit from warm and encouraging relationships with a committed and skilled staff team. The young people we spoke to all talked about how their workers went 'above and beyond' giving them a very high level of care and support. This view was also held by external professionals who worked alongside the service. Young people can rely on their support workers being dependable and tenacious, and this includes when young people themselves struggle to keep appointments regularly.

Young people are recognised as experts in their own experiences and needs, and this shapes the support offered to each person. The staff team are responsive when young people's needs change or when they need support at short notice. This flexibility ensures that young people are supported in a responsive and holistic way and this is valued by young people. Young people's previous experiences are understood and respected, and the staff team demonstrates a strong understanding of the impact of trauma on people's development and emotional wellbeing. The service proactively supports young people to understand and exercise their rights, and will advocate for young people when necessary to ensure that their views are taken seriously by other organisations.

The views and preferences of people are clearly reflected in planning and daily practice. This includes where a young person wishes to decline an aspect of their support. Young people told us that they feel listened to and respected. The service acknowledges that practice around participation could be further improved, and this is an area that is clearly identified within the service's development plan. We look forward to seeing how this has developed at future inspections.

Where young people wish for support to access employment, education or health services, the staff team make use of good relationships with other agencies to ensure young people have the opportunity to get the most out of life. One young person told us that her support worker has helped her to complete college applications and has encouraged her to reach her goals. Another young person talked about being supported at very short notice to attend a medical appointment he was worried about. Achievements and progress in all areas of life are celebrated, and young people are provided with an extended period of tenancy support once they have secured housing to ensure the best possible chance of success.

Young people are supported to stay safe, and where they do not feel safe within their current housing situation, this is acknowledged and plans are made to ensure young people can be kept as safe as possible. Where necessary, there are individual risk assessments in place for young people and for staff when they are lone working. The staff team are all up-to-date in child and adult protection training and fully understand their role and responsibilities.

How good is our leadership?

5 - Very Good

We found significant strengths in aspects of the care provided which supported good outcomes for people, and outweighed the area for improvement identified. Therefore, we evaluated this key question as very good.

There is a robust service development plan in place which is structured around the care inspectorate quality framework and follows SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time-bound) principles. The service has a new manager who had been in post for nine months following a period of the service being without management support. It is recognised that throughout that period, the staff team worked well together to ensure that young people continued to receive a very high level of person-centred care and support where their goals and wishes were paramount.

The experiences of people using the service were regularly reviewed in a number of ways, including informal and formal verbal feedback and written feedback in the form of surveys. Young people said that they felt listened to and valued, and on the rare occasion that young people struggled to build relationships with individual support workers, this was taken into consideration by the service and alternatives were explored.

Young people's support plans and experiences are formally reviewed at approximately six monthly intervals. This includes an evaluation of outcomes, and allows for impact and progress to be monitored and evidenced. Although young people's views are sought and responded to throughout their work with the service, participation in formal reviews of support should be strengthened. Whilst this is part of the service development plan, the expectations around timescales and process for review were not particularly clear. This has undermined progress in this area and so an area for improvement has been identified. **(See area for improvement 1)**

The service has clear processes in place for internal and external audit and quality assurance, and we found that this was now being implemented consistently by both internal and external managers. This means that leaders within the service had a clear picture of where there were gaps in service delivery and recording, and this informed the development plan of the service.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to ensure people using the service always receive responsive care and support, the service should ensure that they are fully involved in the evaluation of their care and support.

This should include, but is not limited to, ensuring that all workers are aware of service policy around the timing of support plan reviews, and how young people should participate in this.

This is to comply with Regulation 5(1) of The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210).

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that:

'I am fully involved in assessing my emotional, psychological, social and physical needs at an early stage, regularly and when my needs change' (HSCS 1.12).

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support people's wellbeing?	5 - Very Good
1.1 People experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 People get the most out of life	5 - Very Good
1.3 People's health and wellbeing benefits from their care and support	5 - Very Good

How good is our leadership?	5 - Very Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement is led well	5 - Very Good

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Care Inspectorate
Compass House
11 Riverside Drive
Dundee
DD1 4NY

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