

Mill Court Housing Support Service

Flat 1
Mill Court
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LOCKERBIE
DG11 2HE

Telephone: 07708 471 849

Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
11 March 2024

Service provided by:
Greenleaf House Co Ltd

Service provider number:
SP2018013227

Service no:
CS2022000020

About the service

Mill Court is provided by Greenleaf House Co. Ltd and offers a housing support service to young people in their home and in the community.

The service provides support to young people in their own self contained flats within a block. The service staff have an office on the ground floor. There is also a kitchen and communal sitting room for the young people on the ground floor.

The service sits in a central location in the town of Lockerbie and is close to local facilities, shopping, a train station and local bus routes.

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 6th March 2024. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. This was the service's first inspection.

To prepare for the inspection, we reviewed information about this service available from registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the service was registered.

In making our evaluations of the service we:

- Spoke with four young people using the service and three of their representatives
- Spoke with three staff and two management
- Observed practice and daily life
- Reviewed documents
- Spoke with allocated professionals

Key messages

- Young people experienced supportive and compassionate relationships with staff.
- Young people had developed and were continuing to develop connections within the local community.
- Young people felt safe.
- Young people were fully included in their care planning.
- There were strong links in place to support young people maintain relationships with family and friends.
- Staff were committed and enthusiastic towards ensuring young people's needs and confident about raising safeguarding concerns.

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
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	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 evaluated this key question as very good, as we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

Young people were experiencing nurturing, compassionate relationships with staff. We observed good natured interaction between the young people and staff and there were clearly warm supportive relationships being established. All of the young people we spoke with provided strong statements of positive regard for both the staff group and the manager. Similarly, the staff group showed genuine enthusiasm in providing a high level of care and support to the young people. Through these positive relationships the young people were developing trust in the staff and gaining confidence in them.

One young person stated that, 'staff helped me build confidence to leave my room and socialise' and because of this level of support they would '...recommend (the service) to every young person'.

It was also clear that the young people had confidence that their views would be listened too. One young person described how staff respected their views and treated the young person as the expert in their life. Social workers to the young people also commented that the staff ensured that the young people's views were taken into account and 'put them first.'

Developing links with the community was promoted by staff and young people were engaging in chosen physical activities in local clubs and with their education in school and college. Young people were assured by this support that their aspirations were fully respected.

Maintaining positive friendships and relationships was also encouraged by the service. Where assessed and considered appropriate, some young people had friends visit them in the service. Staff ensured that all young people were respected on these occasions and their privacy maintained.

Staff had a good understanding of their role regarding safeguarding responsibilities and had a clear focus ensuring young people were protected from harm. Staff were also not risk averse, demonstrating a proportionate response to identified risks and enabling young people to engage fully in developing a more independent lifestyle. This approach empowered young people to engage safely in the activities they had identified for themselves and to further integrate into the community.

Staff demonstrated a very good understanding of the young people's health needs together with having an understanding of the effects of trauma on development. Staff were alert to the day-to-day wellbeing of the young people and would take a proportionate approach to engaging them in support. Through this measured approach they recognised and celebrated the progress of the young people whilst also being alert and responsive young people's needs. This nurtured trust between staff and young people and enabled positive engagement when a therapeutic approach was required.

The service staff promoted young people's access to health care. Young people were accessing services relevant to their needs with examples of partnership working with specialist stakeholders.

How good is our leadership?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, as we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

Social workers we spoke with emphasised that the manager and staff were very good at communicating where improvements for outcomes for young people could be made. To identify these improvements, the service performance and quality assurance were monitored by the manager and the service provider through several methods.

Managers recognised the valuable positive relationships staff had nurtured with young people and encouraged staff to take responsibility for managing young people's care planning. Staff engaged young people in key time meetings to evaluate the progress of their plan and to seek their views on any changes they felt were required.

The service provider also conducted their own quality assurance visits to the service; with identified improvement suggestions reported to the manager and team.

Staff were encouraged to voice their views of the service during team meetings, in individual supervision meetings and through considering admissions through the matching assessment. Incident recordings were discussed within the team and reflective discussions used to identify where the team could learn from experiences and introduce improvements.

Furthermore, the manager had promoted reflection by the staff team through identifying practices relating to specific health and social care standards. These practices, views and suggestions contributed to the overall service evaluation.

How good is our staff team?**5 - Very Good**

We evaluated this key question as very good, as we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

The service manager had developed a consistent and committed staff team. Those we spoke with displayed enthusiasm towards ensuring young people's needs were being met, their views heard and their safety assured. The staff were knowledgeable and sensitive regarding individual support needs and aware of the need to maintain young people's privacy among the peer group.

The service provider had the appropriate principles in place regarding safer recruitment. The service had maintained a low turnover of staff providing consistency of care for young people. The staff had undergone a supported period of induction and a probation period to monitor safe, nurturing and reflective practice. A responsive learning culture encouraged the staff to seek out and complete not only the services mandatory training but training in subjects particular to the young people's needs. This approach aimed to provide young people with a knowledgeable and consistent staff team. We did identify, however, that not all staff had completed training in some subjects; such as the providers chosen behaviour support model and knowledge of continuing care support. Whilst this issue has not been to the detriment of the young people's outcomes, we have identified it as an area for improvement to maintain consistency, and will look at this further at the next inspection. (See area for improvement 1).

Staff we spoke with described a strong supportive staff team with good morale who had a commitment to ensuring the young people's safety and positive outcomes. They spoke positively of their management support and described how team meetings, supervision and good teamwork nurtured a reflective learning culture that aimed to promote young people's health and well being. Social workers we spoke with confirmed this impression of the staff group and manager.

Areas for improvement

1. The service provider should review the staff training and ensure all staff access training in the services chosen model of behaviour support to ensure consistency of approach.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state: "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes. (HSCS 3.14) and "My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well". (HSCS 3.19)

How well is our care and support planned?

5 - Very Good

We evaluated this key question as very good, as we found major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

The care plans for young people clearly demonstrated their views were fully taken into account. Individualised personal plans contained up to date key information on the young people providing a very good insight into their preferences and aims. Young people's particular strengths were recognised as well as areas where support would be beneficial.

Multi disciplinary meetings and reviews were established and taking place consistently. Social workers told us of the very good communications between staff and social work and the regular updates on progress. Where necessary and in line with young people's particular needs, additional specialist assessments and reviews were conducted. This ensured that support was consistent and all involved were fully informed.

Risk assessments contained good insight into the needs of young people, what concerns to be alert to and what responses were advised. These assessments were constructed in partnership with young people stakeholders.

Whilst remaining very positive about the relationship with staff, some young people expressed an opinion of feeling not listened to by the staff. On further discussion, we heard that the young people and staff had discussed matters where perhaps the staff had not clearly explained the conclusion to the young people. We highlighted in feedback to managers that staff should ensure young people have clearly understood when there is a need to make some contested decisions.

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
How good is our staff team?	5 - Very Good
3.3 Staffing arrangements are right and staff work well together	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and personal planning reflects people's outcomes and wishes	5 - Very Good

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