

ROOM4U Teenage Fostering Service Fostering Service

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Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
3 October 2024

Service provided by:
Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust

Service provider number:
SP2003002647

Service no:
CS2016347836

About the service

ROOM4U Teenage Fostering Service was first registered in 2018 and was developed specifically to provide a family placement service for vulnerable teenagers, including young parents and their young children. The service is provided by Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust, a registered charitable organisation based in Edinburgh.

At the time of this inspection, the service provided foster and adult placements to seven young people, with seven registered caregiver families.

The organisational values of Dean and Cauvin Young People's Trust are Care, Acceptance, Perseverance and Hope.

During our inspection year 2024-2025 we are inspecting against a focus area which looks at how regulated services use legislation and guidance to promote children's right to continuing care and how children and young people are being helped to understand what their right to continuing care means for them. Any requirements or areas for improvement will be highlighted in this report.

About the inspection

This was a short notice announced inspection which took place from 10 September 2024 to 3 October 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 five young people using the service and seven carers
- spoke with three staff and management
- observed practice and daily life
- reviewed documents
- spoke with visiting professionals
- reviewed survey responses from caregivers, young people and external professionals.

Key messages

- Young people benefitted from affectionate and stable relationships with highly committed caregiver families.
- Caregiver families reported a very high level of responsive and person centred support from staff within the service.
- Young people's relationships with family members and other important people were well supported by the service and caregiver families.
- While young people were kept safe, the service should aim to embed more effective ways of recording protection concerns and any follow up action.
- All young people supported by the service were in education provision, including young people over the age of 16. Many young people within the service had a history struggling to go to school in the past.
- The service should seek to develop specific trauma informed practice training and support for carers and staff members, to complement and enhance the existing work taking place.
- The service took a proactive approach to ensuring young people were aware of their rights under continuing care legislation, leading to good outcomes for young people.
- Young people, caregivers and staff members were active partners in planning processes.
- The service needs to embed more personalised safer caring plans for young people, based on up to date risk assessments.

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?	4 - Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good

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

How well do we support people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people consistently experienced loving and stable relationships with their caregiver families. A social worker for one young person told us, "The carers are excellent. They have really claimed the young person. They advocate for her and offer her a sense of belonging and care". This provided a secure base from which young people were supported to thrive.

Caregiver families enjoyed enduring and positive relationships with staff within the service. One caregiver said, "The support I receive is absolutely beautiful". Timely and personalised responses enabled carers to meet the needs of the young people in their care to a high standard, sustaining families even during difficult periods.

Young people were accepted and valued as individuals and felt that their views and feelings were listened to and responded to. Both caregivers and the wider service actively advocated on behalf of young people to ensure that their needs were championed and to counter discrimination.

Young people were effectively kept safe within their caregiver families and in the wider community. However, the recording and analysis of incidents and protection concerns needs to be more robust. The service has already taken steps to review the paperwork and processes used in relation to protection concerns and we look forward to seeing how this has been implemented in our next inspection. **(See Area for improvement 1)**

The service took a family centred and proportionate approach to supporting young people who needed to spend time away from their foster families. Appropriate checks and supports were in place which promoted the safe use of family and friends within the caregiver's support circle who were well known to young people. Where young people stayed with other carers for short breaks, these were well planned and young people had positive experiences.

Young people's relationships with family and other important people were well supported by carers and the service in partnership with placing social workers. This included, carers working to support young people to build or maintain relationships with brothers, sisters and parents. The service has developed a welcoming and family friendly space that is available for visits with family and staff sometimes supported this by supervising family time where this was part of a young person's plan.

All young people within the service were benefitting from education, including those over the age of 16. For many young people this required a significant amount of support, as attending school had been difficult for them prior to moving to live with their foster carers. Young people were further supported to achieve their goals and follow their passions via the provider's young people's fund, which supported the purchase of equipment or lessons which would normally have been prohibitively expensive.

Caregivers also had access to a wide range of relevant mandatory training as well as additional learning relevant to the needs of the young people in their care. This training was complemented by reflective conversations during caregiver supervision and signposting to relevant reading. We did however find that the service should develop more formal training for caregivers and staff around effective interventions for the care of people who have experienced trauma and loss. Although many carers did take a trauma informed approach due to their previous work experience or personal strengths, all would benefit from working within a credible and evidence-based model for therapeutic support. The service has proactively begun to explore some options to address this, which is welcomed. **(See Area for improvement 2)**

Caregivers and the wider service worked well together with partner agencies to ensure young people's emotional and physical health needs were met. Along with promoting healthy balanced diets and active lifestyles, this support ensured that young people were supported to have good health outcomes.

The service undertook high quality assessments of carer capacity at all stages, including for annual reviews and approval as adult placement carers. The views of young people and their caregivers were well represented and the service prioritised building strong trusting relationships between workers and young people which made this more meaningful. This was complemented by strong practice in matching and transition planning, which was reflected in the low incidence of young people having to move on from families in an unplanned way.

Young people of all ages using the service were aware of their legal right to 'stay put' under continuing care legislation. Caregivers, young people and placing social workers described the process of transition from fostering to adult placement as 'seamless', minimising anxiety for young people. The service ensured all young people approaching adulthood or living in continuing care placements had welfare assessments in place, which were person centred and regularly reviewed. Young people are also able to make use of Dean and Cauvin's throughcare and aftercare support.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that children and young people benefit from the highest quality therapeutic care, in line with the commitments of The Promise, the service should seek to develop or source learning opportunities that support carers to develop a stronger trauma skilled approach.

This should include but not be limited to: ensuring the staff team have access to high quality specialist training to further develop skills and knowledge, and ensuring all carers engage with training opportunities to help them strengthen their approach to supporting children impacted by trauma.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

2. To ensure that children and young people in need of increased support or protection receive the highest quality multi-agency response, the service should seek to develop more robust processes around child and adult protection.

This should include but not be limited to: ensuring that notifiable events are shared with the Care Inspectorate within timescales; ensuring that there is high quality analysis of all incidents and protection concerns and ensuring protection concerns are always shared with the lead agency directly by the service.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities' (HSCS 3.20).

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

We evaluated this key question as good, where several strengths impacted positively on outcomes for children and young people and clearly outweighed areas for improvement.

Young people were actively engaged in multi-agency planning for their care and support. Some young people who had never felt comfortable attending reviews and planning meetings in the past were empowered to take part with the support of their carers. This helped to ensure that their wishes and preferences were at the heart of personal planning. All young people benefitted from plans that were regularly reviewed, evaluated and updated.

Children and young people's care and support was enhanced by the involvement of caregivers and supervising social workers in every aspect of their care planning. They strongly advocated for the needs and wishes of young people and supported them to access independent advocacy support where this was wanted or needed.

All caregiver families had family safer caring policies in place, although there was some variation in the quality and detail within these policies. Although foster carers were clearly skilled in responding to young people's unique safe caring needs, there were no written individualised safer caring plans in place for young people. The service has recognised this gap during the inspection process and has a plan to put these in place for all children and young people as a matter of urgency.

Similarly, although initial risk assessments were undertaken when young people were referred, the service did not review or update young people's risk assessments once they were living with caregiver families. There were some situations where we identified that an updated risk assessment and plan would have supported better outcomes or more timely interagency support for young people. Again, the service has acknowledged this gap and has begun to develop a process that will make practice in this area more robust. **(See Area for improvement 1)**

There were audit processes in place to oversee the quality of recording, documentation and planning processes. The service could have taken a more curious and proactive response to queries raised by auditors who had queried some of the gaps in documentation highlighted during this inspection.

Carers were supported to develop their own recording of young people's experiences and outcomes and where regular weekly logs were completed, placing social workers advised that these were helpful for care planning and supported effective interagency working.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that young people are cared for by caregivers who confidently follow best practice in relation to promoting physical and emotional safety, the service should embed more robust planning processes for individualised safer care and responding to risk.

This should include ensuring that individualised safer carer plans and risk management plans are in place for each young person, which are regularly reviewed alongside young people and their caregivers.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that: 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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?	4 - Good
1.1 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 Children, young people and adults get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 Children, young people and adults' health and wellbeing benefits from the care and support they experience	4 - Good
1.4 Children, young people, adults and their caregiver families get the service that is right for them	5 - Very Good
How well is our care and support planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects the outcomes and wishes of children, young people and adults	4 - Good

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