Supported Lodgings Scheme
Adult Placement Service

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Telephone: 01241 435069

Type of inspection: Announced (short notice)
Inspection completed on: 14 September 2017

Service provided by:
Angus Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000043

Care service number:
CS2013315948
About the service

Angus Council Supported Lodging Scheme registered with the Care Inspectorate on 20 May 2013.

The service is a component of the Angus Council Throughcare and Aftercare Team. The service provides ex Looked After and Accommodated young people the opportunity to live in the home of a carer who has been assessed and approved by the council’s Supported Carers Panel.

A number of Supported Lodging Providers (SLPs) were caring for young people on a fostering basis and made the transition to SLP to allow for continuity of placement. This is laudable. The service provides young people with a resource that allows them to develop their life skills in a supportive environment, helping prepare them to move to a more independent setting.

At inspection, eleven SLPs were registered with the service and nine young people were being supported.

The Supported Lodgings Scheme aims to ‘bridge the transition from the care system to independent living by offering a supportive environment in which young people can develop life skills and confidence” and “to provide young people with the opportunity to live in a supportive home environment to develop the skills required for fully independent living - a time to mature emotionally’.

What people told us

We spoke with four young people by telephone and received two completed Care Standards questionnaires (CSQs). Views of the service were very positive. Young people told us that they felt very well supported by their SLPs and that they regarded their placement as ‘home’. Young people ‘agreed’ or ‘strongly agreed’ with the statement ‘overall, I am happy with the quality of support this service gives me’. Comments included:

‘SLPs are very good - I feel supported - I feel part of the family’.
‘I feel very well supported - it’s like a family’.
‘it’s a great service - I feel very well supported - I can talk to them (SLPs) about anything’.
‘I am very happy here’.
‘I am settled in this placement - I get on really well with my SLPs’.
‘no complaints - I’m fine here - I get on with my SLPs very well’.

We spoke with seven SLPs by telephone. All were very positive about the service that they received. They told us that they felt very well supported by the service, that communication was effective and that staff were very approachable and helpful. Comments included:

‘I am very happy with the service - all levels of staff are approachable and staff are always available for advice’.
‘10 out of 10, an excellent service - (staff member) and manager are very supportive’.
‘communication is very good, I can always get hold of someone - staff are very positive’.
‘I am very happy with the service - staff are very good indeed’.
‘very good communication - staff are very good’.
‘communication is great - staff are excellent, they are there when I need them’.
‘10 out of 10 - an absolutely excellent service - staff are lovely’.
Self assessment

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We looked at their own improvement plan and quality assurance paperwork. These demonstrated their priorities for development and how they were monitoring the quality of the provision within the service.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

- Quality of care and support: 5 - Very Good
- Quality of staffing: 5 - Very Good
- Quality of management and leadership: not assessed

What the service does well

At this inspection we looked at the quality themes 'Care and Support' and 'Staffing'. We found that the Supported Lodging Scheme provided very good support to Supported Lodging Providers (SLPs) who in turn provided very good care and support to young people.

Young people trusted SLPs and told us that they were well cared for and supported. We saw that the service had very good procedures in place to match young people with SLPs. Conversions from foster carer to SLP had provided young people with consistency and continuing care and support.

Very good placement review arrangements were in place that involved two area managers and the manager of the service.

Young people had been helped to achieve, with three young people attending university, four attending college, one employed and attending college and one employed. All were in long-term, stable placements where they felt "part of the family". Young people told us that they could discuss any issues with their SLP.

SLPs told us that they were supported and described visits and telephone conversations with their workers. They also had the opportunity to attend the SLP support group. In addition to access to workers, this forum allowed for interaction with peers and occasional guest speakers, the most recent being Barnardo’s who provided an input on Child Sexual Exploitation. The National Health Service was to provide suicide awareness training in the near future.

We saw that training opportunities were available to SLPs, who also had access to the foster care training programme. SLPs had recently completed training in child protection, working with children with disabilities, child development, health and safety and communicating with young people.

In discussion with SLPs, it was clear that they regularly used their initiative and experience to support the health and wellbeing of young people. This included issues and choices relating to diet, exercise, independent travel, education and employment.

The service was committed to consulting with SLPs, young people and other professionals to improve service delivery and outcomes for young people. Questionnaires had been used in the past and we saw that exit interviews took place. Returned questionnaires that we saw were very positive about the service.
Communication between professionals directly supporting young people and workers supporting SLPs, was regular, and effective, and played a key part in sustaining effective placements.

We found that the service was well-managed and staffed.

The manager, the resource worker and the social care officer held a range of appropriate qualifications and had access to Angus Council’s training programme. Recent training events included autism, female offenders, suicide intervention, attachment and peer supervision. The service was represented in Supported Lodgings and Continuing Care sub groups of the Scotland wide Throughcare and Aftercare Forum (STAF). This enabled staff to work to current best practice.

All staff were trained to a level that allowed for, or will allow for, registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). We found that they had a very good knowledge of the SSSC Code of Practice and National Care Standards.

A very good model of staff supervision was in place, with workers describing a supportive and supporting working environment.

What the service could do better

SLPs should undertake the on-line Fostering Network training on ‘Promoting the Achievements of LAC Children in Education’ and ‘Supporting Young People Leaving Care’.

The service was preparing to support unaccompanied young people and was recruiting carers to that end. The manager should be supported in carrying out this work.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. SLPs should undertake the on-line Fostering Network training on ‘Promoting the Achievements of LAC Children in Education’ and ‘Supporting Young People Leaving Care’.

National Care Standard, Adult Placement Service - Standard 5: Management and Staffing Arrangements.
Complaints

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

Inspection and grading history

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