

HELP (Argyll & Bute) Ltd Housing Support Service Housing Support Service

17/19 John Street
Dunoon
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Telephone: 01369 70 76 00

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

19 February 2019

Service provided by:

HELP (Argyll & Bute) Ltd

Service provider number:

SP2004938599

Service no:

CS2003053769

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

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

HELP (Argyll and Bute) Limited is a Housing Support Service based in Dunoon town centre, with an additional office and outreach service in Rothesay. The service provides housing support for young people 16 - 25 years, who experience homelessness or are at risk of becoming homeless.

The service has a number of key objectives which include:

- To offer support to young people who are homeless, in threat of homelessness or coming out of care.
- To offer support to young people to sustain a tenancy, and obtain and sustain employment or training.
- To promote a healthy wellbeing.
- To develop a wide range of social, community and agency contacts.
- Assist young people to contribute to and participate in community life in areas where they take on a tenancy.

At the time of this inspection, there were 77 young people using the service.

What people told us

We met with some young people during the inspection process and reviewed feedback from recent consultations conducted by the service. These are the views of young people using the service who were asked in what ways had HELP supported them.

"They fought to keep my house in place and have been helping me build my self confidence and I attend as many activities as I can and got me clothes to be able to attend job interviews which have gone well".

"It made me feel involved and shows me that I am to be a parent that has to take advice on bringing up my baby also keeping my flat clean and prepare for the birth and advise on the benefits I can claim".

"They help me in lots of ways. I really trust them and I don't trust many people".

"I think they're really good people who will do anything for young people. I've had lots of support and if I hadn't I don't where I'd be. I can come here anytime to speak to anyone. They always make time for you".

"I love doing things outdoors. The task force lets me do things that improve the community. I painted a nursery. They were grateful".

Self assessment

The provider was not required to submit a self assessment document for this inspecting year.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Quality of care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| Quality of staffing | not assessed |
| Quality of management and leadership | 6 - Excellent |

What the service does well

During this inspection, we considered the quality themes relating to Care and Support and Management and Leadership. Further to speaking with young people, staff and a range of external stakeholders, we awarded grades of excellent for both quality themes. We also reviewed written information to help inform the inspection process.

A recent service satisfaction survey found that 97% of young people who accessed the service over the past year, felt that their life had been significantly improved and 92% commented that they felt more connected to their local community, with 100% linking in with local groups.

We met with some of the young people, who similarly expressed the outstanding support they received from the service, with some stating that, "I think HELP is first class. They have really helped me to grow up and I'm making a difference to other people", and "HELP are great. I come to the cooking sessions. I'm quite shy but it's a good way to meet other people. I feel much more confident". Further evidence demonstrating exceedingly positive outcomes, included young people who recognised that, "My life has truly changed and become so much better thanks to HELP. I have my own home, friends that are amazing and I'm working toward being a potter", and "HELP believed in me when no one else would. I had no family to help me so staff at HELP, they were like my family, just someone to listen to me when I needed an ear and they knew I could do things I wanted to do and I don't know what I'd be doing now without them". These personal testimonies from young people demonstrated how significantly valued they felt by the service and it was convincingly evident that through routine consultation with young people, the service retained an excellent focus, which built upon the individual needs of all young people.

We believed that there was a genuine spirit of compassion and commitment conveyed by those who worked at the service, modelled through the exceptionally strong leadership of the manager. This was exemplified through the wide range of ways in which the service impacted all areas of young people's lives. For example, one young person interested in pursuing a Duke of Edinburgh award, decided to volunteer in a media role, which led to aspirations of hosting their own radio show. Other examples focused on the abilities of young people who played sport at national level, representing their country at the Homeless World Cup in Norway and who in turn secured a tenancy in the city, to support their involvement. When staff spoke of young people's achievements, whether this related to sustaining a tenancy or finding ways to be part of the community, it was with pride and warmth. They viewed themselves as enablers, who truly placed young people at the centre of their practices.

Further examples of this excellent provision were evidenced through holistic supports which impacted so positively on young people's lives. The service provided housing support and worked intensively with housing providers, but it also recognised the benefits for young people, of becoming active members of their communities and so, a key development priority identified by the service, sought to improve the quality of young people's lives through active citizenship. By supporting shared interests and aspirations, not only for themselves, but also for their communities, young people participated in environmental projects, painting football club changing rooms, linking with befriending groups to carry out gardening work for elderly residents and supporting a small community to achieve a national horticultural award. This type of activity not only raised the profile of young people, it supported young people's belief in their ability to contribute and succeed and therefore by implementing highly creative approaches, used to encourage and enable young people to contribute to their own development, we found a notable impact on their local communities.

We visited some areas where the impact of this work was clear and we spoke with some members of the skills development task force who told us, "It's a good feeling knowing that you're doing something important. Makes me feel good about myself", and "I've learned a lot doing this. It's nice when other people see the change you've made".

We also found that where barriers prevented young people from accessing the same opportunities as other young people, that the depth of knowledge, skill and local connections of those working at HELP, promoted improved outcomes for young people. This included enabling young people to attend college, by applying for funding to obtain IT equipment and securing paid internet access for the duration of their course. The reputation of the service, meant that funders were also prepared to fund a bicycle for young people to physically get to college, while other examples showed that the service's links with local community groups, supported young people to access work trials, with a view to more sustained employment. Over the course of the past year, the service supported thirty young people into sustained employment, with a further thirty two young people achieving employment related qualifications.

In order to assess the effectiveness of extensive partnership working, we spoke with representatives from employment, housing and social work. Without exception, senior personnel expressed immense confidence in the ability of HELP, as a service to truly understand the challenges facing young people at risk of homelessness, and who are often disconnected from their communities. We heard that the manager was a key contributor on various strategic and local forums and that they provided a pivotal role in representing young people's needs to the wider community. By raising awareness of the often extenuating circumstances which impacted upon young people's ability to successfully navigate processes, aimed at safeguarding their livelihood and wellbeing, the manager ensured that the needs of young people were understood by all involved. During our discussions with partners, it was exceptionally clear that they believed HELP had influenced their ways of working and had considerably improved their understanding of and support for, young people at risk of homelessness.

Overall, the manager and staff team working at HELP, provided inspirational and aspirational support for young people. Through well developed practices and processes, which were routinely quality assured and adapted to meet evolving and emerging needs, young people benefitted significantly from the positive and trusted relationships with staff and the well respected leadership abilities of the manager. With the service continuing to look to the future by identifying and implementing key development priorities, we were assured that young people continued to receive excellent standards of support.

What the service could do better

The service should continue to operate to the excellent standards evidence at this inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Complaints

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

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Inspection and grading history

| Date | Type | Gradings |
|-------------|--------------------------|--|
| 18 Jul 2016 | Unannounced | <div>Care and support6 - Excellent</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing6 - Excellent</div> <div>Management and leadershipNot assessed</div> |
| 25 Mar 2015 | Unannounced | <div>Care and support6 - Excellent</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing6 - Excellent</div> <div>Management and leadership6 - Excellent</div> |
| 6 Feb 2014 | Announced (short notice) | <div>Care and support5 - Very good</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership6 - Excellent</div> |
| 26 Oct 2012 | Unannounced | <div>Care and support6 - Excellent</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing6 - Excellent</div> <div>Management and leadership6 - Excellent</div> |
| 25 Aug 2010 | Announced | <div>Care and support6 - Excellent</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing6 - Excellent</div> <div>Management and leadershipNot assessed</div> |
| 18 Dec 2008 | Announced | <div>Care and support6 - Excellent</div> <div>EnvironmentNot assessed</div> <div>Staffing5 - Very good</div> <div>Management and leadership6 - Excellent</div> |

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