

Elected Member visits to Children's Homes report

<b>Name of establishment</b>	<b>Upper Pendeford Farm</b>
<b>Address</b>	
<b>Name of registered manager</b>	<b>Phillip Johnson</b>

<b>Name of Elected Member</b>	<b>Val Gibson</b>
<b>Date and time of visit</b>	<b>19<sup>th</sup> Novemebr 2015 4.00pm</b>
<b>Duration of visit</b>	<b>1 ½ hours</b>
<b>Date report sent to Registered Manager</b>	

<b>Name of person in charge at time of visit</b>	<b>Phillip Johnson</b>
<b>Names of other staff on duty</b>	
<b>Number of staff spoken to.</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Number of young people present at time of visit</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Number of young people spoken to.</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Initials of young people spoken to.</b>	

Has the previous report been viewed? Yes  No  No

It is not envisaged that each area for consideration will be reported on at each visit, however if there were specific actions for an area previously it would be useful to revisit this area.

<b>AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>THOUGHTS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTED ACTIONS</b>	<b>HAVE ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS REPORT BEEN</b>

		<b>MET?</b>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Physical condition of the house</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What's the general state of the home?</li> <li>• Have children personalised their rooms?</li> <li>• Is there a welcoming area they can entertain visitors?</li> <li>• Are residents able to (with supervision where appropriate) able to use the kitchen to make snacks, drinks, meals etc?</li> <li>• Does it feel like a home, rather than an institution?</li> </ul>	<p>The house was very welcoming and had a very 'warm' feel. The young people are not allowed to put pictures on the walls but have plenty of space to keep or display personal belongings. There is a large comfortable beautifully furnished dining area where I interviewed staff and young people. There is also a very comfortable sitting room. The independence unit attached seemed to be reasonable and comparable to the kind of accommodation young people might move on to. It could all do with a 'lick' of paint as a minimum to improve the décor.</p> <p>When I arrived one of the young people was being supervised to prepare their evening meal. Residents are able to make drinks and snacks supervised where necessary.</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Health of the young people</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How is exercise promoted with the young people?</li> <li>• Are staff being proactive in promoting healthy lifestyles for young people?</li> <li>• Are young people supported to eat healthily?</li> <li>• Are young people given advice and support about relationships and sexual health?</li> <li>• Are young people given advice and support about smoking, alcohol and drugs.</li> <li>• How is young people's emotional health supported?</li> <li>• Do the young people feel enough is being done to keep them healthy?</li> </ul>	<p>Young people are encouraged to maintain a healthy diet and lifestyle. One of the young people is taking horse riding lessons. The member of staff in the kitchen spoke to me about the menus for the evening.</p> <p>There was good evidence of staff support for relationship and sexual health advice. One member of staff told me how she was engaged in positive conversations with a resident about her boyfriend.</p> <p>The young people spoke highly of the staff and felt they could go to them for anything.</p>	
<b>AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION</b>	<b>THOUGHTS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTED ACTIONS</b>	<b>HAVE ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS REPORT BEEN MET?</b>

<p><b>Education or training of young people</b></p> <p>You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do all young people have a school place?</li> <li>• If a young person isn't attending education for some reason, what is being done to make sure they receive some continuity of education?</li> <li>• What practical arrangements are made for study and homework, are there books available in the home?</li> <li>• How is good performance at school encouraged and rewarded in the school?</li> <li>• Do staff attend open evenings etc where appropriate?</li> <li>• Do staff explore ideas about what young people would like to do when they leave school?</li> <li>• Do staff organise trips out or resources to help with course and school work?</li> <li>• Are the young people encouraged to use the library?</li> </ul>	<p>The manager has created a culture that all young people should be in education. He spoke to me about how staff had accompanied a past resident to school and encouraged him to engage, in a positive way. There was some degree of success in this approach. One of the current young people described how she had removed herself from education but was encouraged to return and now hopes to become a vet.</p> <p>There were plenty of books available and young people are encouraged to use them.</p> <p>Trips are organised which are often educational such as visits to museums.</p>	
<p><b>Positive activities and involvement</b></p> <p>You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sorts of activities are available for the young people to access?</li> <li>• What activities do young people currently access?</li> <li>• Do staff take part in activities with the young people?</li> <li>• Are young people supported to engage in life in their local community?</li> <li>• Are the young people supported to get involved in volunteering?</li> <li>• Do the young people take part in participation activities provided by WCC?</li> <li>• Are any of the young people involved with the CiCC</li> <li>• Do all young people attend the young people's meetings?</li> <li>• Do the young people feel they have any barriers to accessing positive activities?</li> </ul>	<p>There are wide ranging activities which are largely determined by the young people. Staff accompany them on trips out to places such as parks, long walks museums, cinema. I am satisfied that a wide variety is provided.</p> <p>There are regular meetings which are attended by most. I am not aware whether any are involved in the Children in Care Council.</p> <p>Young people are allowed out on their own according to their age. One young person said she did not engage with organised activities as she prefers to be out with her friends. This is understandable given her age and she is appreciative of the freedom she has but at the same time enjoys spending time at the home.</p>	

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION	THOUGHTS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTED ACTIONS	HAVE ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS REPORT BEEN MET?
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Transitions or leaving care</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Have the young people been given support in developing independent living skills? (eg budgeting, cooking, using public transport etc)</li> <li>• Are young people supported to get involved in work experience?</li> <li>• Are young people aware of where to go for help and support after they leave the home?</li> <li>• What support does the home offer the children after they leave?</li> <li>• Are young people supported with preparation for interviews?</li> <li>• How do the young people feel about living independently?</li> <li>• Are the young people feel encouraged and supported to attend further / higher education?</li> </ul>	<p>There is an independence unit and young people have full support for moving on. Of the two young people present the youngest was engaged in cooking and the older was operating to do her washing. They both assured me that they were being well prepared for independence.</p>	

AREAS FOR CONSIDERATION	THOUGHTS, COMMENTS, SUGGESTED ACTIONS	HAVE ACTIONS FROM PREVIOUS REPORT BEEN MET?
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Complaints</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;">You could consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do the young people know how to make a complaint?</li> <li>• Do they know how to access the advocacy service?</li> <li>• Do they feel confident in being able to make a complaint?</li> </ul>	<p>The young people did know that they could make a complaint but it was not clear to me that they understood how. This lead me to believe that they did not feel confident about making complaint but conversely it could be that they were satisfied with how they were being treated and so this was not high on their agenda.</p> <p>They both spoke very highly of the staff and the manger and felt they could ask them for support when they needed it.</p>	

<p><b>Staff recruitment, training and support.</b></p> <p>You could consider</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there regular team meetings timetabled so that all possible staff can attend?</li> <li>• Do staff feel supported by management?</li> <li>• Do staff have positive and appropriate training opportunities?</li> <li>• Do staff confirm that supervision is regular, structured and valued in the home?</li> </ul>	<p>Staff do have regular meetings. I met them individually. They spoke highly of the manager and articulated that they were very happy there.</p> <p>I did not ask them about training and supervision.</p>	
<p><b>Any specific issues raised by young people?</b></p>		
<p><b>Any specific issues raised by staff?</b></p>	<p>Staff did voice their concerns about being told the home was going to close and now it is staying open as a respite centre. All questioned whether this was a final and definite decision. I suggest staff are re-assured in this area and informed again of progress and timescales with this.</p>	
<p><b>Was there anything on this visit that raised particular concern?</b></p>	<p>I do think it needs a proper redecoration programme rather than a 'patch up' job both in the main house and in the independence unit.</p>	
<p><b>Was there anything was on this visit that was particularly positive?</b></p>	<p>The house is very warm and welcoming. I was welcomed by one fo the young people which I thought was particularly nice.</p>	
<p><b>Any further comments?</b></p>		

Signed ...*V Gibson*.....

Date.....25<sup>th</sup> November 2015.....