



Re- Evaluation for Investing in Children membership:

Coxhoe Satellite Children's Home

Coxhoe Satellite Children's home first received Investing in Children membership in July 2004. Since then they have continued to re-new their membership. The staff, have shown that they continue to have regular dialogue with young people and that they try and improve the lives of the young people by acting on what the young people want.

Since the previous membership evaluation Coxhoe Satellite Home provided further evidence of dialogue leading to change, so I was looking forward to hearing about it from the young people themselves.

On arrival, I was greeted by David Neil, one of the key workers from Coxhoe Satellite Home. He informed me that out of the three young people (Owen, Lee & Sarah) who are currently staying in the home only one was in. He said that the young men in particular do not like going to meetings so he told me a little about what they the staff have been doing for them. A few example of these are-

- Last year the staff helped 17year old Owen to secure money from social services to go on holiday to Turkey with his family and a friend. They have done the same this year. He is going at the end of May.
- Owen and Sarah both attend further education and training and they needed lap-tops. The staff helped them both to receive a £500 grant to get them.
- Owen also wanted to learn to drive so staff members have helped him get money to go towards the lessons and tests.
- At the moment, Owen is partaking in a plumbing course at the advice of his teacher. Dave is trying to help Owen find somewhere where he can do an apprenticeship, leading into work.

Owen has been involved in the previous evaluation.

Opportunities for Dialogue and Change

When speaking with David (Key Worker) and Sarah (Young person) it was evident that there were numerous ways for young people to participate in dialogue and many changes have occurred from this dialogue.

As stated in the previous evaluation (March 2006), every young person on arrival at Coxhoe Satellite home, is provided with a key worker. The young person will meet on a regular basis with their key-worker usually once a week. This gives the young

person a chance to talk about personal issues, problems in their living environment and is also a time to make requests for change.

“I’ve got the best key worker Alison is great and easy to talk with” Sarah (17)

When asked what the key work sessions are for Sarah replied ***“personal problems”***

Also held on a weekly basis (more or less depending on young people’s needs or requests) are the staff/young person meetings, which are also mentioned in the previous membership evaluation. In brief they are an opportunity for young people in the home to come together with a staff member and to make requests for change. The ideas are then fed to the manager, who then discusses it with the staff, and once a decision has been made, it is fed back to the young people.

Although this is good practise, and it allows the young people to make changes to their lives, I would like to suggest that to improve the effectiveness of these meetings the young people should meet straight with management.

“Young peoples meetings is to discuss how we think things could be made better in the home” Sarah

The home has a relaxed atmosphere and as there is always a staff member in the house. It is the perfect place for ongoing informal dialogue which both residents and staff seem happy to have.

When asked for some examples of change, Sarah spoke about how she wanted to be more independent and hated having to ask for her money and tell them what it was for. So with much discussion it was decided that all the young people would receive their allowance on a Friday and from that they had to buy food, clothes and toiletries.

I asked, “When have you felt that change has happened from something you’ve said?”

Sarah replied ***“little things change all the time but I wanted to be more independent with my money so I told them and like now I get more trust with money I get all my money on a Friday now and I have to budget”***

Finally I asked if Sarah liked the house she replied,

“Most of the time”

“It’s canny here”

“I like it ‘cause its chilled”

It is evident that dialogue is an integral part to the way the staff work and interact with the young people at Coxhoe Satellite Home. Change happens on an individual basis catering for the individuals needs. It is clear that positive change comes from the continual dialogue based on the young people’s issues.

Due to the nature of the home I left the report with Alison. The young people had the chance to read it and make any changes. I received a fax of the report with a note from Own saying he agrees with the report. Although I did not get to speak to Sarah again she had expressed that she felt Coxhoe Satellite Home should receive Investing in

Children membership renewal. It is with this endorsement, I have no hesitation recommending that Coxhoe Satellite Home receives a renewed Investing in Children membership.

Zoe Sier
Investing in Children
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