

# Edinburgh Young Persons Service Housing Support Service

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**Type of inspection:**

Unannounced

**Completed on:**

28 June 2018

**Service provided by:**

LinkLiving Limited

**Service provider number:**

SP2004004684

**Service no:**

CS2004061279

## About the service

Edinburgh Young Persons Service is registered to provide housing support to vulnerable adults between the ages of 16 and 25 years living in their own homes and in shared accommodation. It is one of a number of services provided by LinkLiving, a voluntary organisation and registered charity.

The service has two teams; the Positive Transitions Team and the Visiting Support Team. Both services are managed by a service manager with teams consisting of senior support workers and support workers.

This project is predominantly for young people moving on from care settings. It offers young people a supported tenancy where they get practical, social and emotional support while learning the skills needed to manage their lives and live more independently.

There are monthly meetings with the City of Edinburgh Throughcare and Aftercare panel to discuss young people who will need support going into their adult lives. These are attended by LinkLiving staff and other organisations involved in supporting young people leaving care.

The Visiting Support service operates from LinkLiving's headquarters at New Mart Road, Edinburgh. As well as supporting young people living in their own tenancies, staff visit young people in temporary accommodation settings to let them know about what LinkLiving can offer them. The service also support refugees and unaccompanied young people aged 16 and over.

Young people can access a range of training provided by LinkLiving's employability service. The employability service runs an eight week independent living skills course for young people who are care leavers. This includes team building; digital awareness, independent living skills and money for life training. An additional course leading to an accredited Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) Preparing for Employment aware, Scottish Credit and Qualifications Framework (SCQF) Level 4, which is supported by the Throughcare and Aftercare team along with LinkLiving support workers.

Young people can also achieve an SQA Cooking Award (SCQF Level 4) which teaches them about healthy eating and cooking skills. There is also a drop in service for LinkLiving tenants to learn digital skills. Where English is not people's first language they are supported by interpreters. Young people can learn English online and work towards a City and Guilds Digital Skills qualification and free online Open University courses covering a range of subjects.

At the time of inspection around 90 young people were being supported with around 20 full-time equivalent staff.

The service has a statement of aims and objectives including:

- 'To offer practical, emotional and social support to people in their own homes and to assist them to maintain their tenancy.
- To develop effective relationships with service users supporting them to cope with their lives in a positive and planned way so that they can make informed choices and take responsibility for their actions.'

## What people told us

We received very positive feedback from young people who we met and who completed care standards questionnaires before the inspection. There were many positive comments made about the quality of staff and the way they were supported by them.

Comments included:

'This service is just great. I can't believe the difference between Link and other places I have lived. I have been in lots of care placements in my life and this is by far the best. People actually care about you here and they listen to you and that is really important. They are there when you need them. The staff are great, easy to talk to - and I am working and I am also going to volunteer so I get experience in the type of work I really want to do.'

'I have a great support worker. All the staff here are really good. I have a job and I am now going to move on to my own place.'

'Everyone's support is different but the support and respect I have been given/shown in the past year since working with Link has been outstanding. I have grown in confidence and have the ability to ask for help if/when I need it which over a year ago I struggled with.'

'I'm happy because I feel my needs are met. Everything I put as my goals I'm already aiming for or are already achieved. I feel I'm progressing and trying to build my confidence. I don't know what I'll do without support from LinkLiving'

'(Workers' names) are both the only workers I have been referred to that I felt safe to talk to without being judged or mocked. They were beyond amazing with supporting me, both emotionally and with my tenancy.'

'(Workers' names) are excellent workers and LinkLiving are a great organisation and I don't know what I'd do without them.'

'My support worker always goes out of his way to meet my needs and help me get on.'

'Very helpful and friendly, on the ball regularly checking up to see if I'm OK. Good service.'

'Great service. Wouldn't change a thing - Have always been a great help.'

'I have had lots of help. There are many forms to fill in. My support worker speaks Arabic and has been very good at helping me understand things. She comes with me to college and I have been learning English and need my qualification in English as I want to go to university. I am very happy with the help I get. I keep in touch with my family and I meet with people from other countries at the community centre.'

'Link have supported me through hard situations in my life. I will always be grateful for their support and understanding. They have been professional, helpful, understanding, supportive, good at guiding me into the right places and overall very friendly and kind. I have also learnt a lot of techniques from staff of how to deal with speaking on telephone, meetings and how to approach services I need.'

## Self assessment

We are not asking services to submit a self assessment for this inspection year. During the inspection we discussed the service's development plan and progress made since the previous inspection.

From 1 April 2018 the new Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) replace the existing standards. These new standards seek to provide better outcomes for people who experience care, and services should now be familiarising themselves with these. We would encourage services to raise awareness with staff and people who experience care and explore what they mean in their specific setting, and consider how they impact upon how they support people. The standards can be accessed at: <http://www.newcarestandards.scot/>

## From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

## What the service does well

Edinburgh Young Persons Service had successfully secured a tender for continued funding and extending housing support provision across Edinburgh. This was due to the positive outcomes achieved by young people in sustaining their tenancies and developing life skills to help them reach their potential. People supported were really happy with the service and the way staff supported them practically, socially and emotionally.

The service worked in partnership with other agencies to promote better outcomes for vulnerable young people and make transitions between services less stressful. We heard positive feedback from agencies which the service had regular contact with including:

'A support worker visits our service on a weekly basis so that he builds relationships with the young people living here in temporary accommodation. The young people look forward to his visits and it makes their transition into their own tenancies so much easier because they know about LinkLiving and what they can do to help them. I only have praise for the service and they will go out of their way to help with anything if they can.'

'This is a service that goes that extra mile to help young people. They will always ask if there is anything that they can do to help, even for people they are not directly supporting. We work in partnership to find the right type of support for young people.'

The service promoted involvement by inviting service users to the annual staff conference, completing annual customer satisfaction surveys linked to the health and social care standards, involving service users in staff recruitment interviews and involving people regularly in planning and reviewing their own support plans. This meant that people had choice and control over the way their support was provided, had their views listened to and had opportunities to contribute to service development.

Support planning involved young people setting and reviewing their goals and regularly assessing outcomes:

'I am involved in planning my support. My support worker is really good and we meet to look at my plan and

discuss how things are going and things I have achieved and things that I still want to achieve. This helps me to share things with my support worker and work out how to deal with any problems I am having.'

The organisation had safe recruitment processes to protect service users from people who might be a risk to them. People got consistent support from skilled, experienced and valued staff who they had built relationships and there was high staff retention:

'My colleagues and I have a unique, extremely person-centred way of working with young people which allows us to build lasting and effective relationships, allowing young people to achieve their goals while having strong connections with the community. I think it is a brilliant team led by great leaders who believe in us and our abilities.' (staff member)

'I have worked for LinkLiving Young Persons Service for many years. The values of the service played a massive part in me staying here for so long. The service is well led and well supported by the bigger Link Group. All LinkLiving staff are valued for the work they do and play a vital role in giving that vital helping hand to vulnerable and disadvantaged people.' (staff member)

Staff training and development was continuous and regularly reviewed to ensure that training matched the needs of young people supported.

The Psychologically Informed Environment approach involved regular reflective practice sessions with a psychologist. This was improving outcomes for young people and promoting continuous learning opportunities for staff.

## What the service could do better

We discussed promoting further involvement opportunities for young people, such as being involved in reviewing service information and policy development. We also discussed ways of supporting young people to understand the Health and Social Care Standards and include some information about these in the service information they receive.

We advised extending information about young people's contribution to the service improvement plan so that it shows better how their views and experiences have influenced service delivery.

The service planned to extend the PIE (Person-In-Environment) approach to the visiting support service so that staff there could also be involved in the reflective practice sessions. We support this, and other training opportunities for recently recruited and longer term staff, as outlined in the most recent staff learning and development plan.

## 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](http://www.careinspectorate.com).

## Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings
30 Jun 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 6 - Excellent
30 May 2014	Announced (short notice)	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
22 Apr 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
17 Sep 2008	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good

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