“Enabling and Developing Excellence within a Residential Workforce”

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Introductions

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SYNOPSIS

We will examine how an investment in workforce development makes a difference to children and young people and raises the bar within the context of Minimum Standards.

The Workforce Landscape

For all providers, there is always an intention to improve looked after children's opportunities to better their life chances.

In making this statement for providers, the question is how do we do this within the context of the professional workforce, who care for them on a daily basis and how making a positive difference is embedded through the promotion of support, education and a sense of self achievement?

Our Journey started with the company growth in putting 'care' into the make up of the the health and social care sector.

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Minimum Standards

The regulations for all providers establish what we can do as a minimum for children. When looking at equality and opportunity we need to go above and beyond.

To create these opportunities as leaders within the social care sector, we embarked upon setting a standard to train, connect and empower. Within this vision, our children and young people became central to this concept.

As a provider of care, our workers and their attachment to each individual child is paramount. People attracted to the Health and Social Care field, particularly residential, are for the most part care experienced or have a willingness to help others, but often not qualified.

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Change in Residential Settings

Number of settings on the 31st March 2021 and percentage change since 31st March 2020

317 independent fostering agencies — 6% increase

59 residential family centres — 2% increase

2,706 children's homes of all types — 10% increase

18 residential holiday schemes for disabled children — 6% increase

2 secure training centres — No Change

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STAFF TURNOVER

More providers are experiencing higher levels of staff turnover volatility.

Over 60% of providers reported staff turnover greater than one in five members of staff, a substantial increase on 36% in the previous survey.

Source: Children's homes workforce literature review

https://members.the-cha.org.uk/documents/6ef6f7ab-4770-4d3c-a93d-41fdc6373656.pdf

Our Ethos

Train

Our accredited training and qualifications are available in Online and Virtual Classroom formats and as blended learning sessions to offer a unique learning experience. Our current, thought provoking and reflective content provides an innovative and exciting solution.

Connect

We work with a number of Public and Third Sector partners to help Connect and Empower Health & Social Care professionals, providing access to Webinars and Conferences, bringing in keynote speakers and bringing people together after many months apart.

Empower

We create bespoke packages to enable providers to get their staff inducted, trained and qualified and are approved by a number of accreditation and awarding bodies including Highfield Qualifications and CPD to give providers and regulators confidence in the product.

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Aims of Think Tank Academy

The overarching aim of Think Tank focuses on delivering relationship, inspired training.

To further understand the importance of connection and communication to build relationships.

Improving the workforces wider learning and understanding of triggers and trauma and its long-term effects on children and young people.

Enhancing staff's empathy when supporting children with adverse childhood experiences.

Training staff in advanced subjects that help facilitate deeper understanding so they can adjust their responses and manage incidents.

Continuing to innovate the learning environment with technology that creates an experience or 'real life' situations.

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Start of the Journey

Whilst there is a willingness to learn and create opportunities, this often can be hit and miss and time can be wasted as individuals do not have the connection or the knowledge to the right resource.

Creatively we focused on what was missing and how we could plug the gap to have a foot hold in making a difference for children and young people.

The vision of Think Tank Academy came to fruition in 2019 where we worked with staff, managers and young people into what we thought health and social care staff needed to learn and develop. The Academy grew from ideas of experience and from a team that knew what was required in our initial plans.

The Journey continued…

The children were fundamental in talking about their experiences. From children residentially to children who participated in youth forums (The Hive).

Their voices were used to tell stories so that workers, before embarking on training, could reflect on the experience and it would then become live to the learner.

Through this piece of work, children also focused on finding a voice and reflected on their opportunities and how making the wrong choice was supported in looking at something different.

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Statement of Values

To examine quality of opportunity, we completed a piece of work around our value base which set the conditions of the way we would work to ensure the learning platform had an ethical and professional foundation.

PRIDE

P	R	I	D	E
Professionalism	Respect	Integrity	Development	Equality

Roadmap to Success!

From our initial vision in 2019, over the past two years we have been able to expand our vision into apprenticeships and placements.

In 2021-22, we supported students from Edge Hill University to gain employment in our animation team, a Data Analyst Apprentice, and four looked after children progressed into apprenticeships.

Workforce Development

Evidence suggests that taken alone, additional qualification requirements may not be effective unless they are part of more systemic changes.

Adopting strengths-based approaches that encourage and support young people to take more responsibility for their own lives.

Source: Children's homes workforce literature review

https://members.the-cha.org.uk/documents/6ef6f7ab-4770-4d3c-a93d-41fdc6373656.pdf

Learning Management System (LMS)

Think Tank Academy has invested £500,000 into a new Learning Management System (LMS) for the sector to drive the professional learning and development opportunities.

Interview Skills – Adult and Children's Care – Essential Level
Virtual

Working with Parents and Carers – Children's Care – Essential Level
Virtual

Mood and Behaviour Dysregulation – Children's Care – Intermediate Level
Virtual

Communication Skills – Adult and Children's Care – Essential Level
Virtual

Learning Management System (LMS)

The LMS has been designed and built with both learners and employers in mind, providing easy to navigate access to all available course information.

Including a live course calendar, with just a few clicks, you can book any course – delivered face-to-face, virtually or online.

Working Partnerships

'Reverse engineering' the concepts – we know some of the barriers to learning our young people face

Using this knowledge, we have collaborated as two organizations to develop a concept site that has been trialed by our sister company Exceptional Care and will form part of the Learner Management System,

The concept creates a resources library that contains:

Internal and external resources for professionals to use

Interactive and easy to navigate

Provides a good evidence base for Managers to access key performance data at their fingertips

EXCEPTIONAL CARE LIMITED
BRINGING HOPE TO CHILDREN'S LIVES

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Information at your fingertips!

Final Thoughts

“Don't let them promote you, don't let them transfer you, don't let them do anything that takes you off the bridge of that ship, because while you're there, you can make a difference.”

Star Trek Generations

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