

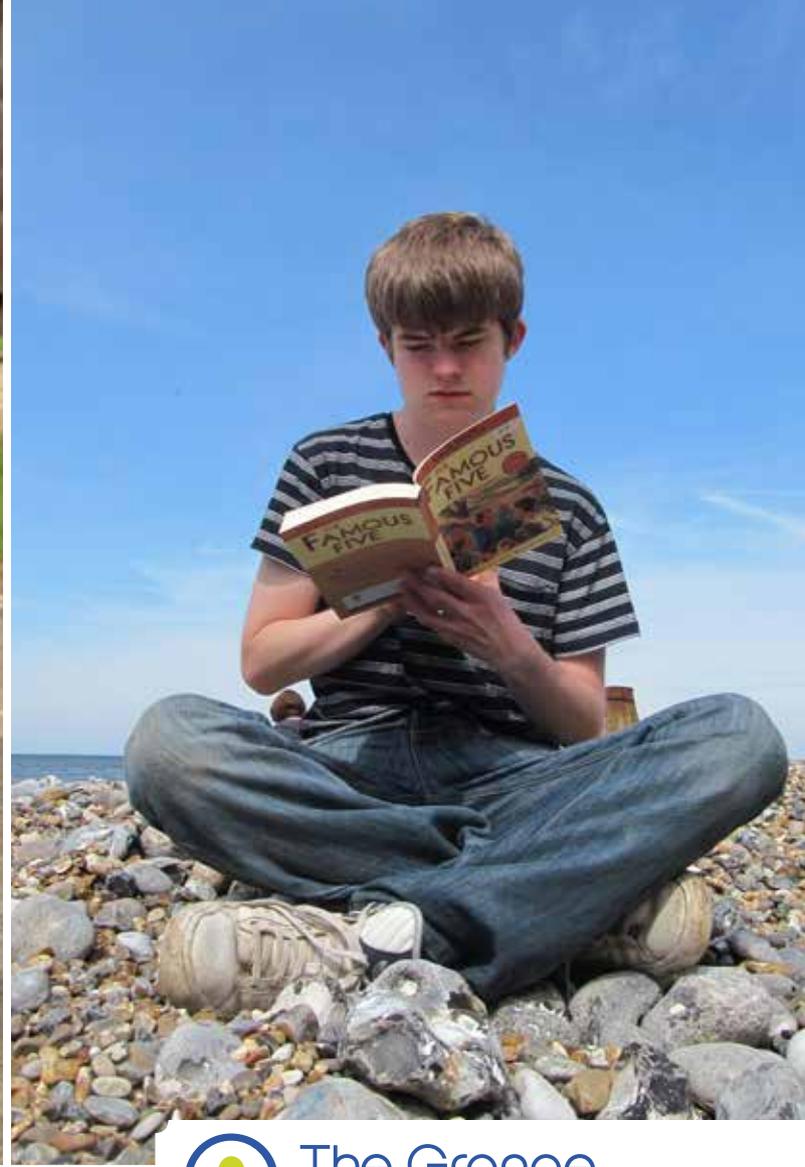
Rob's Story

"It's like a family, but better."



South View

From arriving with us as a very troubled teenager, Rob has become a pleasant, levelled and mature young man. I applaud him for his efforts." **Amy Hana, Rob's Support Worker**



The Grange
Therapeutic School

The Grange Therapeutic School School Progress Report

"Rob had not been in school for more than six months after being excluded from his mainstream secondary. Prior to that, several school placements had broken down.

Like all South View boys, Rob re-started his education at The Grange Therapeutic School near Oakham. The school's nurturing and flexible approach to education offers disillusioned young people like him a real chance to make educational progress.

He's now studying IT, Tourism and Business at Stamford College and hopes to complete a three year course in Further Education.

Rob benefitted initially by being placed in our nurture group. He made the most of being in this therapeutic environment and embraced it.

He's a very cheerful young man and in spite of his learning difficulties he really wanted to make progress in areas including social skills. Often he would give up his break and lunch time to work and chat to the teaching assistants in the common room.

In our weekly rewards system and achievement assemblies, Rob was frequently voted one of our top pupils.

He achieved GCSE grades in English and History as well as BTEC Level 2 in Catering. It's a huge achievement for a teenager whose learning difficulties are compounded by speech and language issues.

His achievements, particularly when you look at his level of complex issues, are extraordinary."

..... **Tom Kempin - Headteacher, The Grange Therapeutic School**

At the age of 16, with ten years of broken school placements and four foster homes behind him, Rob arrived at South View Children's Home three days before Christmas. He recalls feeling particularly nervous and apprehensive on that cold, dark, wintry afternoon.

South View's registered manager Jim Proctor also remembers the day well. "I felt it was a rotten time of year for any young person to be joining us. But I spoke to the other boys and explained there was a boy who needed a place over Christmas and they were all adamant they wanted him to come and join us in time for the celebrations."

"Coming to South View was the best Christmas present I've ever had." says Rob, and explains why.

"It's really cool here. The staff are all kind and they're all fair. They listen to us and respect us as individuals. It's like a family, but better."

All South View boys attend The Grange Therapeutic School and Rob responded well to its nurturing approach. With the wrap-around combined support of teachers and carers, the confused and very angry teenager started to settle down.

THE GRANGE - SPECIALIST HELP

After 12 months of weekly psychotherapy sessions at The Grange, Rob decided he need not continue and his views were respected by both school and children's home.

"Rob knew he could still open up to different members of staff here and we are always in close communication with The Grange." said Jim *"It was an option he could go back to if he needed to."*

"Because we work so closely with The Grange Therapeutic School we are able to wrap our approach into a twenty four hour package with all the support we could ever want." said Jim.

SOUTH VIEW - A 'PROFESSIONAL FAMILY'

It's the atmosphere at South View that the boys love. Jim Proctor and his team work hard to make it feel like home.

"All the lads here are like brothers. We fall out sometimes but we always make up and get on together and we help each other out." says Rob.

The reality of his own life is much harsher: his two younger brothers were also placed in care — the youngest has since been adopted.

Ask Rob about his favourite times at South View and he says simply: *"I've loved it all."*

He recalls that in his last few weeks at South View - over the school summer holidays - he went to a theme park, the beach, a zoo, a seal sanctuary, ten pin bowling, played golf, enjoyed geocaching, visited Cresswell Crags and caught up with the latest film releases at the local cinema. The annual holiday to Cornwall in 2014 was his favourite memory.

"I've been really happy at South View. This is where I consider home." says Rob.

Whilst living at the children's home, Rob also completed work experience in his own time on Sundays in a local charity shop. His ambition is to work in a Games shop and, perhaps, one day open his own business.

Asked if he could imagine the progress he'd make when he first arrived down the long South View drive, he replies: *"Never! I'd never have imagined it or believed it could happen! I smile all the time now. Everyone has really helped me, but I've done it myself."*

"This is Rob's home and it always will be." says Jim. *"We're very proud of him and we wish him every success for his future."*

LEAVING HOME

the successful transition to semi-independent living

With a carefully planned and conscientiously managed transition, Rob moved from The Grange Therapeutic School to a combined IT, Tourism and Business Studies course at Stamford College.

After three months, when he had settled successfully into his new college environment, staff helped manage his move from South View children's home and move to semi-independent living in a shared flat in Oakham.

To ensure everything ran smoothly, the transition was managed by Jim Procter and his team, at a pace that would ensure success.

The South View team also worked hard to ensure that his social services department at Kirklees in Yorkshire - a hundred miles away - recognised that Rob's home and future now lay in Stamford and Rutland, not back in a strange and unfamiliar town of Huddersfield.

Rob will be able to access help from his support workers until he is 21 and possibly beyond. His team supports him for 30 hours a week: and help him at his flat at least twice a day - in the morning to ensure he's up and ready to catch the bus to college and at teatime, to oversee his mealtimes and to ensure he's still having a healthy and balanced diet.

On both occasions they can deal with anything else Rob might need - however small. **South View also still help him to manage practical aspects of his life, including money management, although Rob has his own bank accounts for spending and saving.**

In Rob's own words:

"I've been really surprised at how easy I have found it, moving from school to college.

I really love it and I'm enjoying the course. I wouldn't be there without the help of my teachers and everyone at South View. To be honest, the way I was going, I could have ended up in prison.

Now, I'm proud of what I've achieved and I'm proud of what I'm doing at college.

I get up at seven and I catch the bus to college four days a week. I love being able to go home and just chill out in a place I can call my own.

It's also great knowing that I can come back to South View when I want to, because it still feels like home. It's been reassuring having the staff's support and knowing there is always someone who will help me. They always welcome me back.

I like cooking for myself: it's another career option. My favourite meals are chilli, curry or spaghetti carbonara.

I love college, just like I loved school. I love South View but I also just love my own flat."

"I'm really happy with my life."

"I was concerned about how Rob would cope in a big, busy college environment but he has been amazing and has made loads of new friends. He's often up and ready for college before we arrive at his flat each morning and it's wonderful to see him enjoying his independent life."

Amy Hana, Rob's support worker

STOP PRESS

Robert has recently been to see a new one-bedroomed flat and is hoping to move again very soon to a place he can call his own.

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SUCCESS

*"I'm really happy with my life. **I smile so much now.** I never used to really smile at all. I still do get angry occasionally but if I do, I know how to deal with that feeling in an appropriate way. I've been taught how to do that here and it works. I made lots of friends at school and I have loads of friends at college."* ROB

*"We worked with Rob to really help his very low self esteem. Low self esteem is incredibly corrosive. We had to make Rob understand that it wasn't his fault that he had inadequate parents. It wasn't his fault he was taken into care. It didn't make him a bad person. When I look now at the **confident, social and popular young man Rob has matured into,** I am incredibly proud of him and all his achievements."* JIM PROCTER, REGISTERED MANAGER SOUTH VIEW CHILDREN'S HOME

*"It has been a pleasure to help care for Robert from the day he arrived at South View. Of course he's had his difficulties and we've helped him to deal with those over the last two years. He's been very willing to take charge of his issues and has always tried to better himself. Now, to see him mature and move on successfully from school to college where he is doing so well is just amazing to witness. **From a very troubled teenager he has become a pleasant, levelled and mature young man and I applaud him for his efforts.** Rob had the potential to be a very sheltered and quiet person but we've been able to help his confidence grow and improve his self esteem and now he's friendly, sociable and confident and makes lots of friends."* AMY HANA - ROB'S SUPPORT WORKER

FAMILY CONTACT

Staff at South View children's home are continuing to help Rob manage contact with his real father - someone he hadn't known for 17 years. The contact came at the same time as his move to college and to semi-independent living: South View staff were keen to ensure it was as positive an experience as possible for Rob. They supervise the letters Rob sends and receives from his Dad and Rob hopes that one day in the future they might meet.

"It feels really good. He has a new wife and they have two dogs. He's told me in his letters that he is really proud of what I have achieved here and that feels really good."

He also keeps in touch with his two brothers.



The South View Approach

“Our professional version of the extended family network is why our placements work, whether children are coming here from foster homes or other children’s homes.

Each child is an individual and we treat them as such.

They will all respond differently and so we adapt according to the individual. There is no ‘one size fits all’ here: **we respect them and they learn to respect us.**

At South View we aim to replicate an extended family network.

Within the children’s home we have male and female staff across a wide age range which ensures each young person has someone they can relate to and find easy to talk to.

In a family situation a teenager might struggle to talk over problems with Mum or Dad but might have an Auntie, a family friend, or an elder sibling they are comfortable talking to: **we replicate those age groups at South View with our staffing.”**

..... **Jim Proctor** - Registered Manager, South View children’s home

“I’ve loved it all at South View. I’ve been really happy here. I consider it my real home and I think I always will do.” **Rob**

South View children’s home & The Grange Therapeutic School:

Part of the Acorn Care & Education Group

“We want our pupils to be able to leave us confident, with good life skills and an ability to navigate the world that lies ahead of them.

We strive to enable our young people to grow up and have the most fulfilling adult lives possible, through further education, meaningful employment and to be able one day to become parents themselves with children of their own who thrive.

Ultimately, the success of what we do is measured in decades; in generations. *I’m always delighted to hear of young people like Rob who has made so much progress in so many different areas of his life and I’d like to wish him well for the future.”*

..... **Dr Natalie-Jane Macdonald** -
Chief Executive, Acorn Care & Education

For more information regarding South View children’s home please email the Residential Manager, Jim Proctor:
j.proctor@acorncare.co.uk
www.acorncare.co.uk



South View

PART OF THE ACORN CARE & EDUCATION GROUP