



YOUTH FOYER

ACCREDITATION REPORT

Service Name:

On Route Foyer (CHADD)

Location:

6 Dixons Green Road, Dudley, DY2 7DH, United Kingdom

Date of Report:

March 2026

Details:

Accommodation for 16 - 25 year olds with 36 Bedspaces

Assessors:

Claire Prendergast and Joel Lewis

Accreditation Level Awarded:



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Introduction

The Foyer Federation is pleased to award On Route Foyer **Leader Youth Foyer Accreditation** following a comprehensive assessment of On Route Foyer against the Youth Foyer Quality Standards.

The Leader Award recognises On Route Foyer's excellence in fully embedding the Youth Foyer Quality Standards. The On Route Foyer team is delivering impactful, strengths-based, and transformational support for young people, while also influencing wider practice and championing Advantaged Thinking across the local community and the wider sector. The Foyer is a beacon of innovation, leadership, and youth empowerment.

Key features of a Leader-accredited Foyer include:

- Consistent, organisation-wide embedding of Youth Foyer Quality Standards
- A strong culture of youth leadership, co-production, and empowerment
- Proven innovation and significant positive impact on young people's futures
- Active contribution to sector-wide learning and best practice

This report provides an overview of On Route Foyer's strengths and areas for ongoing development.

Youth Foyer Accreditation Profile



On Route Foyer’s overall level of Youth Foyer Accreditation is **Leader**. This profile offers a visual summary of the Foyer’s areas of strength and ongoing development across the ten Youth Foyer Quality Standards.

For a deeper understanding of this profile, please refer to the detailed findings for each Quality Standard in the report, along with the accompanying lists of strengths and areas for improvement.

1. Staff Culture & Capabilities

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: The service has a highly skilled, resilient and tenacious workforce and a strong Advantaged Thinking culture.

Assessment Findings:

The On Route Foyer team is highly motivated, close-knit and well supported. Staff speak very positively about leadership and consistently describe managers as approachable and available. During the visit, the team seemed settled and collaborative, with strong relationships and a shared commitment to doing the best they can for young people at the Foyer.

Following a review of the team structure recently, the Foyer restructured the team to introduce specialist roles, including an Employment and Learning Mentor and a Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion. This appears to have strengthened the offer to young people and is working well, allowing staff to focus on their areas of expertise.

There is a well embedded focus on wellbeing with a recently developed shared Health and Wellbeing strategy (for young people and staff) which is shaped around the Five Ways to Wellbeing. Staff are encouraged to take care of their health and wellbeing during the working day, whether that's taking time to exercise, have a break or connect with colleagues. This is reinforced by flexible working arrangements alongside access to a Medicash app and a well utilised Employee Assistance Programme, all of which support staff in feeling valued and supported. This commitment is further reflected in the provision of a dedicated wellbeing space which is equipped with treadmills, bean bags and space to eat lunch, play darts and spend time together.

CHADD shows a clear commitment to developing staff, identifying a group of 'emerging leaders' and investing in training and development for this group. To support this, there are also positive examples of internal progression, with team members being supported into senior roles and young people gaining employment.

The Foyer is keen to increase staff involvement in the wider Foyer Federation offer. Whilst On Route Foyer are an active strategic partner with the Foyer Federation, creating more opportunities for the wider staff team to engage with other Foyers and peer networks would strengthen shared learning and support the continued growth of best practice.

In summary, On Route Foyer is underpinned by a committed, resilient and well-supported team, with leadership that clearly values people, wellbeing and development. The introduction of specialist roles and dedicated wellbeing spaces further strengthens practice. Expanding staff engagement with the wider Foyer Federation network would further enrich learning and strengthen an already positive team culture.

2. Leadership & Management

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: The service is led by Advantaged Thinkers who set an ambitious vision and ensure delivery of transformational services.

Assessment Findings:

The leadership at On Route Foyer is clearly grounded in Advantaged Thinking. Staff are given high levels of autonomy, particularly in relation to the activities budget, where they are trusted to plan and deliver opportunities for young people with light-touch managerial oversight. This approach supports creativity, responsiveness and staff ownership.

CHADD demonstrates a thoughtful and inclusive approach to quality development with the leadership team setting clear strategic direction while enabling teams to develop their own targets. Progress is reviewed through regular fortnightly meetings, creating space for reflection, learning and accountability. Young people are also involved in quality development activities, reinforcing a shared and youth-led commitment to continuous improvement.

Strategic partnerships is a notable strength of CHADD, with active involvement in local and national networks influencing housing, homelessness and rough sleeping strategies. As the lead partner within the Dudley Young People's Alliance, CHADD coordinates a range of specialist provision across employment, neurodiversity, talking therapies, anger management and training. The organisation also works closely with the local council, describing itself as a tenacious partner that actively shapes conversations, brings agencies together and helps drive strategic direction.

Governance and oversight arrangements for On Route Foyer are robust and well embedded. These include a structured audit schedule, monthly accountability meetings, annual independent auditing and regular commissioner-led reviews. The award of a local authority youth supported housing kitemark for the Foyer further supports and reflects the quality of provision.

In line with the organisation's new strategy, On Route Foyer has clear priorities and plans to strengthen move-on pathways for young people over the next five years, highlighting a significant investment in the Foyer model and the long-term outcomes for young people.

The Foyer has identified an area for development to formalise clear terms of reference around positive risk-taking as leaders, to further strengthen a more consistent, proportionate and Advantaged Thinking practice across the organisation.

In summary, On Route Foyer is led by ambitious Advantaged Thinkers. With clear plans in place to strengthen move-on pathways and embed a positive risk-taking culture, the Foyer is well positioned to strengthen its leadership team.

3. Systems, Data, Policies & Procedures

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: The service has effective systems, policies and procedures that support Advantaged Thinking ways of working, data capture and impact tracking.

Assessment Findings:

On Route Foyer has put thoughtful systems in place to support Advantaged Thinking ways of working, with clear investment in making information easier to access and more useful in day-to-day practice. Changes and upgrades to the SASSHA housing management system has made a difference to how staff work with young people. Being able to access support plans and key information on tablets is really effective at enabling natural and collaborative support conversations.

It is good to see that distance travelled reports can be generated simply, and a distance travelled dashboard allows for a clearer picture of change over time. This is a great tool to keep the focus of young people's support on strengths, growth and progress rather than just tasks or next steps.

There is a good awareness of where systems and procedures can be strengthened further. The Foyer has identified the need to improve how young people's progress and achievements are celebrated and shared. The recently appointed Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion will be focused on co-designing a clearer, more motivating pathway that links progress, learning and rewards.

The Foyer is also reflecting on how it captures what happens after young people leave the Foyer. At present, there is no consistent approach to tracking destination and longer-term progression, and earlier attempts at putting systems in place for this have been challenging. The team are approaching this creatively again, with the Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion also taking the lead on this.

Alongside these plans, a new service user involvement policy has been drafted recently, and the focus now will shift to bring it to life in practice.

In summary, On Route Foyer has accessible, strengths-based systems, policies and procedures. With planned developments to put in place new processes for celebrating progress and understanding young people's progression journeys after move-on, the Foyer is further developing its robust and effective systems to support Advantaged Thinking ways of working.

4. Innovation, Influence & Growth

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: The service builds strong partnerships and connections, prioritises continuous development, and promotes a positive view of young people.

Assessment Findings:

On Route Foyer has created opportunities to celebrate and promote a positive view of young people in the community, with young people being central to the planning and delivery of CHADDfest; a full day event bringing together music, food and activities for the local community. Future funding has already been secured to continue this work. The 'Cake not Hate' event is another strong example of youth-led activity, using creative approaches to promote inclusion and address hate crime.

The Foyer maintains a comprehensive network of partners to widen opportunities and learning for young people and is highly visible within local and regional networks. The team regularly attends a wide range of forums and events, including the Dudley CYPF Network, Homelessness Strategy Group, Together Festival and Dudley Pride. The Foyer and the young people in it have also been involved in work around the new National Housing Standards in Dudley and across the West Midlands. This is a great example of the Foyer and young people in it, being involved in their local community as contributors and leaders. They have also played a key role in shaping the local youth supported housing Kitemark for Dudley Borough, helping to set high standards across the area. Being shortlisted for a national children and young people's award for partnership working further reflects the strength of their partnership working.

Leadership in partnership working is particularly strong. As lead partner in the Dudley Young People's Alliance, CHADD coordinates provision across multiple organisations and provides training to partners to embed an Advantaged Thinking approach. This demonstrates confidence, influence and a clear commitment to continuous development across the wider system.

The set up of the first Learning Disability Foyer (with confirmed funding from Homes England behind it), is another fantastic example of CHADD leading exciting developments in the sector. This is in an early development and planning phase, with intentions for opening in 2028.

There is a clear opportunity to strengthen how the Foyer communicates and promotes its offer to young people. Social media is currently underused, and the organisation recognises the need for a more engaging and youth-friendly approach. The development of a clear marketing and communications strategy, working alongside the organisation's new external provider, would help to create a more strategic plan to increase visibility, celebrate success and further promote positive narratives about young people.

In summary, On Route Foyer demonstrates strong, values-led partnership working with clear evidence of youth involvement, community connections and sector leadership. By strengthening its marketing and communications approach, the Foyer has a great opportunity to further amplify young people's voices and extend its already positive impact.

5. The Physical & Digital Environment

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: The service has well-utilised, accessible physical and digital spaces tailored to and co-designed with young people.

Assessment Findings:

The physical environment in On Route Foyer is a clear strength and has been thoughtfully designed to feel welcoming and safe. Significant investment (secured through the Heart of England Community Foundation) has resulted in the psychologically informed refurbishment of 11 flats. This work was undertaken by a local design partner with consultation and involvement from the young people at the Foyer.

The building is clean, well presented and furnished to a high standard. Shared facilities include a gym, internet cafe, mentor office, meeting room, garden and cafeteria, with additional pool and gaming facility across the road from the main building. Spaces are intentionally designed for shared use between staff and young people, supporting accessibility, connection and informal engagement. During the visit, the main entrance stood out as particularly improved, with framed quotes, personal touches and bright decor that set a positive, youth-friendly vibe as soon as someone walks into the Foyer.

Positive and encouraging displays including a 'good news' board and case studies and young people's artwork, creates strong positive messaging and celebration of young people throughout the building.

Digital spaces are utilised well in parts, with CHADD's Facebook page celebrating achievements and the Foyer using a WhatsApp broadcast channel to share information with young people.

There are well considered plans to strengthen digital spaces further. The Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion is developing a digital welcome pack, accessible via QR code, which will provide up-to-date information on activities, events and external support. A tenants portal is also in development, which will enable young people to manage rent accounts, submit repair requests, give feedback and contact staff which will significantly increase independence and digital engagement. While Wifi is generally good, planned upgrades to two buildings will help ensure consistent access across the whole Foyer.

In summary, On Route Foyer provides high-quality, welcoming and youth-centred physical spaces that clearly reflect co-design and PIE principles. With planned developments to improve digital access and online tools, the Foyer is well placed to further support young people's engagement and ownership of their physical and digital environments.

6. Coaching & Support

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: Young people develop their skills, strengths and talents through access to person-centred support and coaching.

Assessment Findings:

Support and coaching within On Route Foyer are clearly person-centred, strengths-based and valued by young people. This is reflected in the case studies and feedback shared, with young people describing lasting increases in confidence, belonging and personal growth. One quote from a young person spoke about confidence that “will stay with me forever” and feeling rebuilt through community and support. These reflections provide great evidence of meaningful, transformational impact.

Support planning is intentionally flexible, with no rigid templates in place. This allows mentors to focus on relationships and conversations rather than forms; creating space for truly personalised coaching and shared responsibility for progress.

The Foyer actively creates opportunities for young people to recognise and showcase their strengths and talents. Young people are encouraged to display artwork, create video content for events, and deliver activities for their peers. The Foyer also nominates young people for national recognition, including Inspirational Youth Awards, further reinforcing belief in, and celebration of young people’s potential.

The Foyer has identified an opportunity to build on this practice of celebrating success by formalising how achievements are captured and recognised through developing a structured, digital learning pathway. This would help ensure that even small steps forward are consistently acknowledged and celebrated.

In summary, On Route Foyer delivers highly effective, person-centred support and coaching that helps young people build confidence, recognise their strengths and grow their talents. By formalising its approach to celebrating progress, the Foyer has a strong opportunity to deepen impact and ensure every young person’s achievement is recognised and valued.

7. Education, Employment & Enterprise

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: Young people are positively progressing their education, training, employment or enterprise goals.

Assessment Findings:

Support for education, employment and enterprise is a clear strength of On Route Foyer, with strong partnership working and a wide range of progression opportunities available to young people. The Foyer has established excellent relationships with providers across the borough, including partners within the Dudley Young People's Alliance, Street League, BCHG Trailblazer, Dudley College and the DWP, creating clear referral routes into learning and employment support.

The Foyer benefits from a dedicated Employment and Learning Mentor who provides regular drop in and group workshops. Young people benefit from a varied learning offer, including workshops with external partners including the Challenge Academy, Street League and Just Straight Talk. Strong links with colleges and alternative training providers also strengthen the education pathways for young people.

The Foyer also makes good use of local labour market connections, creating opportunities for work experience, volunteering and paid roles. Notably, Just Straight Talk has employed an apprentice from the Foyer, and CHADD also provides both paid and voluntary opportunities.

Outcome data strongly supports the impact of this approach. 32% of young people who moved on last year were in education, compared to a national benchmark of 21%, and 39% were in employment, which also exceeds the national average of 34%. These figures reflect both the strengths of partnership and the effectiveness of the Foyer's personalised support.

The Foyer has identified an opportunity to further strengthen this area by developing an accredited learning offer. Introducing a more structured learning pathway would help formalise progression and provide additional motivation for young people working towards education and employment goals.

In summary, On Route Foyer delivers strong, well-connected support for education, training and employment, with outcomes that exceed national benchmarks. By developing an accredited learning pathway, the Foyer has a clear opportunity to build on this success and further strengthen young people's progress and confidence.

8. Housing & Move On

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: Young people develop the skills needed to maintain a tenancy, manage their finances and live independently in their own home.

Assessment Findings:

On Route Foyers approach to supporting young people to move-on independently is a clear strength of the service, underpinned by strong move-on pathways, effective preparation and excellent outcomes for young people.

CHADD's new five year strategy places a strong emphasis on move-on, with board approved investment to focus on this area. The first steps in the plan to implement this strategy, includes partnership working with a landlord to develop six new units of accommodation for young people this year. Further plans are expected in the following years.

Preparation for independence is embedded well within the learning programme. They operate a maximum two-year stay for young people, however have the flexibility to extend where additional support is needed for a young person to be ready to leave. Young people from the Foyer benefit from high priority banding with the local authority, and move-ons through the council are timely and there are a number of funds which staff support young people to access to enable their successful move-on.

Outcomes strongly reflect the effectiveness of the Foyer's approach to move-ons. There were no evictions in the last year, demonstrating a restorative and preventative approach to tenancy sustainment. 82% of young people moved into social housing. This is well above the national average of 43% of young people moving into social housing. Only 4% of young people moved in with friends or family, compared to a national average of 25%, further indicating the strength of move-on pathways.

Supporting young people to afford supported accommodation once they enter employment remains difficult, with rent affordability contributing to arrears and, at times, delaying move-on. The government's emerging approach to making work pay in supported housing is expected to help address this issue. The Foyer has also recognised the need to strengthen how it tracks young people's progress after move-on, to provide clearer evidence of long-term tenancy sustainment.

In summary, On Route Foyer delivers exceptionally strong preparation and pathways for independent living, with move-on outcomes that significantly exceed national benchmarks. With continued focus to improve post move-on tracking, the Foyer will further strengthen its understanding of its tenancy sustainment impact and long-term independence for young people.

9. Health, Wellbeing & Personal Development

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: Young people grow their confidence and resilience, strengthen their social connections, and manage their health and wellbeing.

Assessment Findings:

On Route Foyer has a joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy for staff and young people, based on the Five Ways to Wellbeing, which provides a shared framework in this area.

The activities programme is co-created and led by young people and offers support for confidence building, personal development and wellbeing. Activities that have run in the past include boxing, cooking, art therapy and clay making. This is all shaped by what young people want and need at different times. This flexibility supports engagement and ownership.

The Foyer demonstrates clear commitment to resourcing partners to work with them. There is a healthy activities budget in place, and fundraising to strengthen and sustain this offer is considered a priority. Access to physical wellbeing support is also strong with the availability of an on-site gym.

Young people can be referred directly to talking therapies through the What Centre, and the Foyer's involvement in the wider Alliance enables access to wrap-around support for young people with higher or more complex needs. The promotion of self-help apps such as Kooth and MindShift further supports young people to access help in ways that feel private and manageable.

The Foyer recognises ongoing challenges in relation to mental health provision within the borough. Engagement with statutory mental health services has been difficult, and strengthening relationships with mental health professionals has been identified as an important area for further development.

In summary, On Route Foyer provides a strong, youth-led and well-resourced approach to building young people's confidence, resilience and wellbeing. With continued focus on strengthening mental health partnership, the Foyer is well placed to further enhance support and ensure young people can access the right help at the right time.

10. Youth Involvement, Leadership & Power

Youth Foyer Quality Standard: Young people have their voices heard, are involved in decision making, and grow as leaders.

Assessment Findings:

Youth voice and leadership are clear strengths within On Route Foyer, with strong evidence that young people are meaningfully involved, listened to, and supported to influence decisions in the Foyer and the wider community. The Foyer has been highly active within the Youth Power Fund, using this as a great platform to embed participation and create real opportunities for young people to lead and shape change.

The Your Voice committee meets regularly and there is good evidence of this committee influencing practical decisions, including consultation around pets and recycling. Investment in youth leadership was strengthened through the employment of Youth Power Business Admin roles, and more recently the appointment of a young person into the Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion role. This role has a clear remit to support other young people to lead.

Young people are actively involved beyond the Foyer itself. The Rise Ambassadors group meets monthly. This is a group of young people within the local community. Young people at On Route Foyer act as Rise Ambassadors, and were central to the planning and delivery of CHADDfest; a community event that successfully engaged the local community and has secured future funding.

Young people from On Route Foyer have contributed as Young Consultants to the Foyer Federation initiatives, including the Talent Bonds selection process, presenting at national events, and creating youth leadership training. Their involvement in shaping learning materials for the Learning Community is another great example of On Route Foyer's young people stepping into leadership positions and offering their expertise. Opportunities to influence wider systems are also evident, including involvement in consultations around the new National Housing Standards, ensuring their voices are heard on policy decisions that will affect their futures. Young people also lead activities and play an active role in staff recruitment.

Looking ahead, CHADD has identified opportunities to strengthen and formalise this work even further. Plans are underway to establish a wider CHADD residents' Committee. The appointment of the Youth Engagement and Wellbeing Champion provides dedicated capacity to lead this work. In addition, the new service user involvement policy will help embed consistency across the wider organisation.

In summary, On Route Foyer demonstrates outstanding practice in youth voice, participation and leadership, with young people leading change in the Foyer and in their wider community. Expanding this work throughout the wider organisation will be a great opportunity to extend meaningful involvement to even more people.

Conclusion

On Route Foyer is a great example of a Youth Foyer “Leader”; demonstrating a strong and well-evidence alignment with the Youth Foyer quality standards, with clear strengths across workforce culture, leadership, partnership working, youth leadership and outcomes for young people.

A highly motivated, resilient and well-supported staff team sits at the heart of the Foyer. Strong approachable leadership, investment in wellbeing and development, and the introduction of specialist roles have created a positive and stable environment in which staff feel trusted, valued and empowered. This culture directly supports high-quality, person-centred practice and is clearly felt by young people.

Young people experience a service that believes in them, invests in their strengths and creates genuine opportunities for progression. This is evident in the quality of support and coaching, strong outcomes across education, employment and move-on, and particularly in the depth and authenticity of youth voice and leadership. Young people are not only consulted, but they are actively shaping service, influencing policy, leading community events and contributing to learning across the wider Foyer Federation network. Move-on outcomes and tenancy sustainment figures are exceptionally strong; significantly exceeding national benchmarks and reflecting a robust, restorative and well planning approach to supporting young people into independent living.

On Route Foyer is also highly visible, well-connected and influential within its local community. Strong partnership working, place-based leadership and sector engagement having delivered tangible benefits, including high-quality facilities, specialist support, funding and expanded opportunities for young people.

Areas for continued development include further strengthening digital systems to celebrate young people’s progress and track post-move-on outcomes, embedding accredited and structured learning pathways, enhancing mental health partnerships and continuing to formalise youth participation and positive risk taking approaches at an organisational level. Importantly, the organisation demonstrates strong reflective practice and ambition, with plans and capacity already in place to address these areas.

In summary, On Route Foyer is a high-performing, values-led service achieving excellent outcomes for young people and demonstrating a clear trajectory for growth, standing as an outstanding example of a Youth Foyer and a beacon of innovation, leadership and youth empowerment.

Accreditation Summary

Key Areas of Strength:

- Strong team culture with motivated, close-knit and collaborative staff team
- A strong focus on staff and young people's health and wellbeing initiatives, grounded in a joint Wellbeing Strategy
- Leadership that empowers staff, cultivating autonomy and creativity
- Positive and proactive partnership working and leadership, with exceptional influence and integration in the wider community
- Strong quality and governance systems, providing foundations for accountability, oversight and best practice
- Trauma-informed, youth-friendly physical environment that has been recently refurbished to a high specification; creating a welcoming vibe that support a sense of belonging and ownership for young people
- Excellent outcomes for young people, with education, employment, move-on and tenancy sustainment outcomes exceeding national benchmarks
- Youth voice, influence and leadership is a standout feature, with great examples of young people leading, influencing and shaping change within their Foyer and beyond

Key Areas for Development:

- Develop an accredited learning offer or more structured learning pathway for young people to complement existing learning offer, offering a clearer system for recognising, rewarding and celebrating young people's progress
- Increase frontline staff engagement with the Foyer Federation offer to strengthen peer-to-peer shared learning
- Improve mental health partnerships locally to improve access and engagement with statutory mental health services
- Develop digital platforms and access for young people through development of the tenant portal and online welcome packs
- Strengthen marketing, communications and social media with a clearer strategy
- Improve post-move-on tracking by developing an approach to capture feedback on post-move-on

- Set up an organisation-wide residents' committee to extend meaningful involvement to even more people within CHADD's services



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