ZOE SUMNER



ABOUT ME

With over 35 years of experience across diverse care settings, my career has been shaped by both professional expertise and personal lived experience. I spent a short time in the care system as a baby, and that early start has always grounded my commitment to improving outcomes for children and young people who rely on the care sector.

I've worked in homeless hostels, prison outreach, drug and alcohol services, tenancy support for vulnerable families, and for the past 20 years, I've specialised in residential childcare. I am passionate about breaking down barriers for young people in care and ensuring they receive consistent, nurturing support - not only while they are living in residential homes, but also as they transition into independence. I've also been a dual registered manager.

My journey in residential childcare began when my own children were young, working nights and bank shifts that fit around single parent life. Over the past 8 years, I progressed into residential childcare management, leading teams, stabilising homes, and achieving an Outstanding Ofsted inspection in January 2026.

After stepping away from management, I've embraced consultancy work, focusing on manager mentoring, quality assurance, and Regulation 44 visits. Supporting managers to grow in confidence, strengthen their practice, and lead positive, child centred teams is something I am genuinely passionate about. I believe every young person deserves a stable home led by knowledgeable, compassionate adults who model good practice and provide practical, professional care.

Outside of work, I love the outdoors, travelling the world, and paddleboarding - anything that brings fresh air, adventure, and balance.

CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

My proudest achievements are the young people themselves - seeing them succeed, grow, and build their lives long after leaving care. Maintaining relationships with many of them over the years is a privilege and a reminder of why this work matters.

I am also proud to have supported homes through closure, recovery and successful re-opening, working alongside management to recruit ,to rebuild stability, strengthen practice, and ensure that young people return to environments where excellent care, safety and opportunity are at the centre of daily life.

KEY SKILLS

- Manager Mentoring & Leadership Coaching
- Quality Assurance & Compliance Visits
- Outstanding Residential Manager
- Regulation 44 Independent Visitor
- Service Stabilisation & Improvement Planning
- Team Development & Culture Building
- Safeguarding & Child-Centred Practice

Updated:
September 26