

Special Stars Homecare Limited Support Service

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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 22 March 2017

Service provided by:
Special Stars Homecare Limited

Service provider number:
SP2014012337

Care service number:
CS2014328590

About the service

Special Stars Homecare Limited is a Care at Home service with an office base close to Falkirk.

The service provides support to children and young people with a range of additional needs, including complex health needs, in their own homes. This provides the family with periods of respite. Care and support packages range from two hours per week to seventy hours per week.

At inspection the service was working with twenty-three children and young people aged from four years to eighteen years.

Referrals are almost exclusively from the local Social Work Department and Health Board.

The provider manages the service.

This service registered with the Care Inspectorate on 18 March 2015.

What people told us

We spoke with ten parents/carers and received seven completed satisfaction questionnaires. Views of the service were very positive, with three exceptions. One parent/carer felt that the service had deteriorated in the last six months, one felt that there was an over reliance on inexperienced staff and one stated that two "new" staff had arrived for care and support where the expectation was that one of the staff would be experienced and familiar with the service user. They also cited cancellation at short notice as an occasional issue. **(See recommendation 1)**. The manager was aware of these views and acknowledged that staff turn over had resulted in a number of new members of the team.

In response to the statement, 'Overall, I am happy with the quality of care and support this service gives me', two parents/carers 'disagreed', one 'agreed - adequate' and fourteen 'strongly agreed'.

In response to the statement, 'Staff treat me (service user) with respect', three respondents stated 'adequate', one 'agreed' and thirteen 'strongly agreed'.

Comments included:

"The staff take time and care when supporting my daughter - they have excellent knowledge about her medical needs - I feel completely positive about her being in their care".

"Communication is very good".

"A wonderful service - really caring".

"I am very happy with the service".

"Great, really good service - any issues get dealt with straight away".

"Staff are very friendly - no issues".

"Extremely beneficial - allowed me to gain confidence".

"Staff are very, very good - they go above and beyond - very approachable".

"I can't do without them - very positive".

"10 out of 10 - very happy".

"Brilliant service - I can't fault them".

"Some amazing staff".

"Good and approachable management".

"Staff are very good - excellent - have learned signing to communicate with my child".
 "Like an extended part of the family - they bend over backwards - really good working relationship".
 "I am very happy with the service - minor issues have been resolved".
 "An excellent service - very friendly and helpful staff".

Two placing social workers responded to our e-mail request for their views of the service. They were very positive, although both stated that they would welcome more regular feedback from the service.

Comments included:

"Special Stars provide a high quality of care and support to my service users".
 "Good understanding and empathy to not only service users' needs but also the impact on their families".
 "Management team have always responded promptly to any issues - they try to accommodate any last-minute changes to care packages and are very efficient in setting up new ones or increasing existing ones".
 "Peace of mind for parents knowing their child is receiving high level of care and support appropriate to their complex needs & respite from the demands placed upon them as parents in coping with these on their own".
 "Communication is adequate with myself and very good with families".
 "Very good management and staff".

Self assessment

The service provided us with a detailed self assessment. They identified areas of good practice and areas for development.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	5 - Very Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

What the service does well

We looked at the Quality Themes of "Care and Support" and "Staffing" at this inspection.

We found that the service provided very good care and support to children, young people and their parents/ carers.

We found that from initial assessment onwards children, young people and their parents/ carers were fully involved in compiling care plans and risk assessments.

Following referral, Initial assessment meetings were carried out by the manager and the depute. These meetings ensured that the service had a very good understanding of the needs of the children and young people.

Each family was given an information booklet that contained key information about the service and how to make their views known. This included the complaints policy and procedure.

Discussion with staff was a regular feature of support and was reinforced by telephone calls and text messages. Some parents/carers communicated via e-mail.

The parents/carers we spoke with stated that they would be confident in raising issues with the manager and depute.

Very good care planning arrangements meant that care and support were carried out in a manner best suited to the individual child or young person.

Care plans provided comprehensive guidance about health, personal support needs and preferences. Care plans were amended as issues arose and in partnership with parents/carers. A formal review of care plan was carried out by the manager on a six monthly basis.

Risk assessments were carried out and reviewed regularly. This maximised the safety of children and young people.

Systems for recording and managing incidents and accidents were in place. There had been none in the last year.

We found staff to be skilled, knowledgeable and well motivated regarding their work. Staff spoke enthusiastically about their interaction with children, young people and their parents/carers.

Staff we spoke with demonstrated a very good understanding of the needs of the children and young people they cared for and were clear about the best ways to meet these needs.

We were told by parents/carers that staff enjoyed very good relationships with their children and young people.

Recruitment arrangements were very good, with relevant checks carried out and references sought.

Staff induction arrangements were very good and included the opportunity to 'shadow' experienced workers. New staff met with the manager or depute on a weekly basis during induction.

Staff held a range of qualifications including HNC and SVQ level 2 and 3.

A new training consultant had been employed and currently, sixteen staff members were undertaking SVQ 2. The training consultant also provided a training event on a monthly basis. Staff had recently received training in moving and handling, gastrostomy, medication, epilepsy, child protection, suction and oxygen. Staff were also encouraged to access e-learning training through the internet.

We saw that staff had received training in 'Makaton signing' in order to communicate effectively with one young person.

We saw that the service also held occasional 'Development Days'. One such event was planned for May 2017 and was to focus on 'team building'.

Staff evidenced knowledge of the SSSC Codes of Practice and the National Care Standards (NCS).

The manager and deputy manager were registered with relevant professional bodies. Staff were aware of the requirements to register with the SSSC in the future.

An annual appraisal system was in place. Staff found this helpful.

Staff members we spoke with said that they felt well supported by managers who they could consult at any time. A 24 hour 'On Call' system was in place.

What the service could do better

We spoke with nine members of the team and received seven staff questionnaires. Staff, with one exception, told us that they felt supported in their work. All staff were subject to an annual appraisal. A minority of staff described formal supervision type meetings. The manager and the depute carried out 'spot checks' and discussed practice with staff on these occasions. However, there was no evidence of regular, formal, practice based reflective and developmental supervision. **(See recommendation 3).**

A staff meeting had taken place last month and another was planned for next month. However, there did not appear to have been any staff meetings prior to this.

Team meetings should be held regularly to allow discussions about practice and developments within the service. Consideration should be given to paying staff to attend. **(See recommendation 4).**

We discussed with the manager how the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included) wellbeing indicators could be incorporated within care plans. **(See recommendation 2).**

In the 2016/17 inspecting year the Care Inspectorate is scoping child sexual exploitation (CSE) practice in children and young people's services. This is part of our contribution to 'Scotland's National Action Plan to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation' and focusses on frameworks of CSE practice, staff understanding and care planning outcomes. We found that the service did not have a CSE policy and that staff had not received training in CSE. **(See recommendation 5).**

See also 'What People Told Us' regarding the views of a minority of parents/carers. **(See recommendation 1).**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 5

1. The manager should address the views of parents/carers regarding:

- a) inexperienced staff
- b) short notice cancellation of shifts.

**National Care Standards Care at Home - Standard 11: - Expressing Your Views and
National Care Standards Care at Home - Standard 4: - Management and Staffing.**

2. Consideration should be given to incorporating the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators within care plans.

National Care Standards Care at Home – Standard 3: Your Personal Plan

3. Staff should receive regular, formal, practice based reflective and developmental supervision.

National Care Standards Support Services – Standard 2: Management and Staffing Arrangements.

4. Staff meetings should be regular and more frequent.

National Care Standards Support Services – Standard 2: Management and Staffing Arrangements.

5. The service should:

- a) include a section on Child Sexual Exploitation within its Child Protection Policy
- b) staff should receive training/briefing on CSE.

National Care Standards Support Services – Standard 2: Management and Staffing Arrangements.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
8 Mar 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 – Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 – Very good
		Management and leadership	5 – Very good

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