

Neil Street Childrens Unit Care Home Service

41 Neil Street
Greenock
PA16 9JA

Telephone: 01475 715809

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 4 September 2017

Service provided by:
Inverclyde Council

Service provider number:
SP2003000212

Care service number:
CS2003001105

About the service

The Care Inspectorate regulates care services in Scotland. Information about all care services can be found on our website at www.careinspectorate.com

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Neil Street Children's Unit provides accommodation for up to six children and young people who are Looked After and Accommodated by the local authority. The service is located in a residential part of Greenock and has good transport links to the town and surrounding areas. The service is accessed via several flights of stairs, leading down to the garden and patio area. Further outside space is located at the front of the property.

The house comprises a large lounge/dining area, kitchen and laundry. There is a separate play room and individual bedrooms and bathrooms on the ground floor. A lower floor provides additional space for meetings and family visits.

The aims of the service include:

"We aim to provide an environment for young people which actively promotes positive growth and change within a caring and structured residential setting, with caring and motivated staff".

What people told us

We spoke with and interacted with young people who were happy to share their experiences of living at the service. Some young people sang for us and told us that they had participated in a recent audition for a music course and that this had encouraged their interest in this activity. Young people told us that they had excellent relationships with staff and that they felt very well supported, both in school and generally in their life. We were able to observe other young people enjoying positive relationships with staff, negotiating how they wished to spend their free time and involvement in activities. One young person played a game of pool with us, while stating that they liked being at Neil Street but very much looked forward to spending time with their family.

We met parents during our inspection visit who told us that they felt very welcomed by the service and were fully included in the care and support of their child. They commented that they thought their child was thriving in the service and that time spent with them had been very positive of late. Parents talked about how their child was growing and developing while living at Neil Street and that they believed that they were happy and felt secure and safe.

Self assessment

We did not require the provider to submit a self assessment document for this inspecting year.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

| | |
|--------------------------------------|---------------|
| Quality of care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| Quality of environment | not assessed |
| Quality of staffing | 6 - Excellent |
| Quality of management and leadership | not assessed |

What the service does well

During this inspection, we considered the quality themes relating to Care and Support and Staffing. Further to speaking with young people, parents, members of the staff team, other professionals and reviewing written evidence, we concluded that for both quality themes inspected, the service was performing at an excellent standard.

When inspecting the service, we were highly impressed by the incredible degree of flexibility and responsiveness demonstrated by those working at Neil Street. The service recognised the importance of timely interventions when supporting young people through evolving circumstances, which impacted upon their ability to cope with daily routines and new experiences. This was most notable when supporting young people to attend and achieve at school. Through exceptionally well embedded approaches, staff made regular visits to school throughout the day, to provide reassurance to young people, who found it difficult to sustain positive attendance or to those who just needed a calming voice to deal with the expectations of varied timetables. When meeting with teaching staff at one local school, we were told of the strong insightful practices of staff at Neil Street and how these helped to keep young people focused on their educational needs. During inspection, we observed this highly supportive practice by staff, who attended at break time in response to one young person's needs and immediately understood the significant benefits to encouraging the young person to rejoin her peers in class.

We considered the exceptional joint working practices with colleagues in education to be a key strength of the service and we found that transitions for young people, from primary to secondary school, had been led by staff from Neil Street, who met weekly with education colleagues to advocate tenaciously for the correct supports to be in place to allow the young person the best chance of success. When we met with teaching staff, they confirmed that their understanding of the child had been significantly enhanced through joint working practices with the service. They commented that the opportunity to develop a clear picture of the complexity of the child's life, had been invaluable to how they conducted their role as educators.

For other young people, who had been previously been out of education for some time, we found that the service had successfully reintroduced them to school and this had allowed them to forge friendships, improve literacy skills, become involved in school team sports and achieve an attendance rate of 99%. Through increased self confidence and with immense self determination, young people had successfully completed their year at school. The service was also particularly aware of the need to provide opportunities for young people to develop wider skills and interests. Young people had been supported to participate in an activity holiday with their peers from outwith the service, contribute to and speak to an audience of over 200 hundred people at the Who Cares? Scotland summer camp, while others had experienced a trip of a life time to the United States, to become an

instructor at summer camp, helping other children to maximise their abilities. These wide ranging opportunities helped to maximise young people's abilities and encouraged them to flourish and feel valued, through personal achievement.

As a means of providing excellent care and support for young people, the service cooperated extensively with partner agencies. This practice had been critical to sustaining extremely positive placements for young people, most of whom had lived at Neil Street for a considerable period of time and viewed this as their home. It was testament to the exceptional skills of staff, that when young people sought support or guidance, for example when raising concerns about their safety and wellbeing, they recognised staff to be 'their family', in terms of acting as responsible adults, who were reliable and consistent in their support. An excellent example of staff committing to their role as corporate parents and going above and beyond their duties, involved a young person who travelled to Glasgow each week to participate in team training, as part of their chosen sport. The significant time and commitment given by an established member of staff, including during their off duty time, meant that this young person was able to achieve success as part of his country's national team at the Special Olympics. In gaining a bronze medal and achieving recognition within his community, this young person had succeeded through the exceptional support from those who advocated for his right to be included, active and involved in how he wished to be supported.

We found that young people received warm, compassionate and nurturing care from staff who were highly skilled and committed to their roles. It was clear that young people were supported sensitively and thoughtfully and this allowed them to thrive within a highly supportive environment. Young people were encouraged to develop healthy relationships with others, whether dating or simply developing friendships and this was achieved through involvement in local groups and clubs, or by welcoming those important to them, to visit young people in their home. Additionally, extremely strong links with local health provision, meant that young people had developed key relationships with workers who supported them to address challenging individual experiences, which impacted considerably upon their lives. For one young person this had been instrumental to them becoming more able to explore their worries and concerns during dedicated sessions with workers, who specialised in mental health. Staff training in the field of mental health had further enhanced the wrap around support for young people and the outcome of this intervention evidenced that young people were now more able to deal with their emotions and vulnerabilities in a more positive manner.

Support for families played a highly important role in supporting young people and in promoting trust and cooperation. We met with parents who told us of the exceptional support they received from staff and how they were welcomed by the service and supported to meaningfully contribute to the care of their child. We found that staff worked tirelessly to communicate clearly and proactively engage parents and this helped to encourage young people to trust those responsible for their daily care and support. The decidedly positive culture within the service, demonstrated that staff valued their relationships with families and that young people's views, rights and needs were respected and valued. This evidence allowed us to conclude that the service had continued to improve and was operating to an excellent standard across the quality themes inspected.

What the service could do better

We advised the service that they should continue to evidence the excellent standards achieved during this inspection.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

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 | |
|-------------|-------------|---------------------------|---------------|
| 30 Jun 2016 | Unannounced | Care and support | 5 - Very good |
| | | Environment | Not assessed |
| | | Staffing | Not assessed |
| | | Management and leadership | 5 - Very good |
| 31 Aug 2015 | Unannounced | Care and support | 5 - Very good |
| | | Environment | 5 - Very good |
| | | Staffing | 5 - Very good |
| | | Management and leadership | 5 - Very good |
| 29 Jul 2014 | Unannounced | Care and support | 5 - Very good |
| | | Environment | 5 - Very good |
| | | Staffing | 5 - Very good |
| | | Management and leadership | 4 - Good |
| 16 Jan 2014 | Unannounced | Care and support | 5 - Very good |
| | | Environment | 4 - Good |
| | | Staffing | 5 - Very good |
| | | Management and leadership | 4 - Good |
| 17 Jan 2013 | Unannounced | Care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Environment | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Staffing | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent |
| 24 Aug 2011 | Unannounced | Care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Environment | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Staffing | Not assessed |
| | | Management and leadership | Not assessed |
| 28 Jan 2011 | Unannounced | Care and support | 6 - Excellent |
| | | Environment | Not assessed |
| | | Staffing | Not assessed |
| | | Management and leadership | Not assessed |

| Date | Type | Gradings | |
|-------------|-------------|--|--|
| 26 Aug 2010 | Announced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed Not assessed 6 - Excellent |
| 20 Jan 2010 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent Not assessed 6 - Excellent Not assessed |
| 10 Jun 2009 | Announced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good |
| 8 Jan 2009 | Unannounced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good |
| 11 Aug 2008 | Announced | Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership | 6 - Excellent 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good |

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