

Dunoon School Hostel School Care Accommodation Service

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Dunoon
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Inspection completed on: 9 November 2017

Service provided by:
Argyll and Bute Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003373

Care service number:
CS2006115758

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.

Dunoon School Hostel is managed by Argyll and Bute Council. The service provides accommodation for up to 70 children and young people from a range of communities in and around the Dunoon area and wider parts of Argyllshire. Young people attend Dunoon Grammar School.

The property comprises of several floors, with separate accommodation blocks for girls and boys. On the ground floor there is a large communal area, kitchen/dining room and various games and relaxation rooms. The bedrooms, some of which are shared, are on the upper floors. The extensive outdoor space, some of which had been developed to offer a patio area, was mainly laid to lawn.

The hostel aims to provide:

"A warm, comfortable, safe, secure and homely environment where you can feel relaxed".

What people told us

We met with and chatted to 17 young people of all year groups. Some of their comments included:

"I like it here. Staff are very friendly"

"You can trust the staff"

"I'd tell my key worker if I had a concern"

"It's good the food. There are a lot of people on the Food Committee"

"There's definitely enough food. There is always fruit available and the salad bar is appetising"

"We have a Wii and play station"

"It would be good if parents could sign stuff to let you go out!"

"It's alright. It's good that I don't have to travel"

"It's sociable. I have friends"

"I like study. I have to do what I have to do. I like that I can access a teacher"

"There's not a single bad staff. They look after you and respect you"

"I like the couch to 5K and going to Hunters Quay and shopping to Braehead"

"There's nothing wrong with the hostel. It's good".

Young people appeared happy to speak with us and share their experiences of living at the hostel. When asked what the best things were, they commented that not having to travel in the mornings and making friends made a difference to them and when asked about what could be better, some young people said that WiFi could be better and later bedtimes would be welcomed.

We also reviewed feedback from families and found that they were very satisfied with the arrangements for their child. Some spoke of being given a tour when they visited and that overnight stays prior to living at the hostel, had enhanced their child's experience and helped them to settle in more easily. Others commented that they were always made to feel welcome and that staff were approachable.

Self assessment

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

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	4 - Good
Quality of environment	5 - Very Good
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

Upon review of this quality theme, we awarded the grade of good, further to our observations of practice, speaking with young people and reviewing evidence of outcomes for those living at the service.

During our discussions with young people we found that they were very positive about their experiences of living at the hostel. They spoke of the Pupil Council and recognised that this forum allowed them to contribute to decisions affecting their support. Similarly, young people commented that the Food Committee, made up of young people and staff, offered them the opportunity to influence what foods were available and to take part in evaluating the menu. We also found that young people were aware of the Welfare Fund, a process by which the financial contribution of families was utilised to the benefit of all young people. This fund was administered by the young people and we acknowledged that young people decided how these monies should be spent. Purchases of arts and crafts materials and various trips, provided evidence of how young people chose to maximise their experiences.

The range of activities remained appropriate to all year groups, with continued access to local resources allowing young people to participate in sports including badminton and football. Creative indoor activity, such as, baking, fitness classes and pamper sessions also added to young people's experiences, as did more formal events and celebrations. Additionally, Open Nights for families, at the start of the new term, continued to provide reassurance and the opportunity to meet with staff to understand how the young people would be supported.

Sine the last inspection, we noted that young people were more aware of all staff and the important role they play in looking after them. The service had worked hard to improve staff and young people's understanding of individual need, for example, some young people with special dietary requirements were part of the Food Committee and staff with an interest in raising awareness of the benefits of recycling, were better known to young people through their efforts.

We met with a representative from Dunoon Grammar School, who informed us of the very good joint working practices in place. Routine communication between the hostel and school helped to identify how young people could be supported to attain and achieve. Well embedded study support continued to offer young people access to teaching staff most evenings and this was well received by parents and most young people. We also found that for young people in receipt of social work support, that hostel staff liaised closely with other services, to ensure seamless supports were in place.

Upon reviewing young people's support, we found that some individual plans had not been updated and key worker records were sparse. Where we did see evidence of good practice, we highlighted this to the manager at inspection feedback and asked that they explore how this practice could be adopted by all staff, responsible for recording young people's plans. In particular, we asked that plans be outcome focused, with key worker records used to augment identified outcomes aimed at improving young people's development. We have made a requirement to ensure that all young people have an up to date plan, in line with requirements of regulated services. Plans should take account of young people's individual needs and detail how the service will support them to achieve positive outcomes. (see requirement 1 under this quality theme).

We considered how existing practices relating to the management of young people's medications might be improved and made suggestions for the service to explore. Particular areas to review, included risk assessment for those young people self administering and how additional supply of some medications could be held within the service.

In relation to the policy used by the service, to promote young people's safety and wellbeing, we found that this did not contain the most up to date guidance, as provided by the Scottish Government. We asked that the Child Protection policy be reviewed. We have made a recommendation relating to this area for improvement. (see recommendation 1 under this quality theme).

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. The provider must ensure that all young people have a personal plan in place, taking account of how the provider will support young people to meet their individual needs.

This is to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements of Care Services), Regulations 2011/210, Regulation 5 (1) - Subject to paragraph (3) a provider must, after consultation with each service user and, where it appears to the provider to be appropriate, any representative of the service user, within 28 days of the date on which the service user first received the service prepare a written plan ("the personal plan") which sets out how the service user's health, welfare and safety needs are to be met.

(2) (b) (iii) - Subject to paragraph (3) a provider of a care service must - review the personal plan at least once in every six month period whilst the service user is in receipt of the service.

Timescale: Two months from publication of this report.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service should review the current Child Protection policy and update this to reflect the most up to date national guidance.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation Services, Standard 7 - Management and staffing.

Grade: 4 - good

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

Upon review of this quality theme, we awarded the grade of very good, further to our observations of the physical environment and after hearing young people's views about the quality of their experience.

The hostel continues to provide very good accommodation for young people who live away from their family home for considerable periods. All internal areas were immaculately clean and tidy, supported by a hard working team of domestic staff members. We found that where young people chose to personalise their bedrooms, this was generally encouraged. Suitable bathing and showering facilities were available. Young people who were coming to stay at the hostel for the first time, were encouraged to visit several times before the start of term and this helped to provide reassurance to both the young person and their family, about what to expect when living at the hostel. Young people told us about their visits, informing us that they believed staff to be friendly and that they liked being at the hostel.

To promote the safety and wellbeing of young people, we found that there was a keen focus on health and safety practices, including assurances of health and hygiene within bathrooms and bedrooms, with enhanced food safety systems operating in the catering kitchen. Infection control guidance had been updated in 2012 and we found that this was robust in guiding staff practice and although we found that other guidance relating to infectious disease was very out of date, we were satisfied with existing measures of safe care practice. We have advised the service to update this guidance as soon as is practicable.

Staff absence had impacted upon the service, particularly since returning after the summer break. We found however, that staff were highly committed and flexible in terms of offering to maintain safe and adequate support for young people. Our discussions with young people confirmed that enough staff were on duty at all times, to provide for their needs.

While considering the current arrangements for dinner, we observed that young people sat at tables which were lined up across the dining room. We wondered whether smaller table arrangements might provide for a more intimate social experience for young people. We asked the service to explore the merit of this suggestion and to consult with young people and staff, to determine any change to existing practice.

Young people and members of the staff team had previously spent considerable time developing a patio and garden area, at the rear of the hostel. This had been highly valued by the young people as it provided a natural outdoor space to meet up with friends and dine outdoors in better weather. During this inspection, we noted that this area required some attention to restore it to its best. We suggested that by the spring, the service should encourage young people and staff, to consider how their involvement may prepare the grounds for maximum use throughout the year.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

Further to discussions with young people, staff and managers, we concluded that the service should be awarded a grade of good for this quality theme.

We met with several staff across all departments, in order to obtain a wide perspective of their experiences of working at the hostel. We observed warm and supportive relationships between staff and young people and it was clear that those responsible for the daily care and support of young people, were knowledgeable about those in their care. Staff spoke enthusiastically about working with the young people and how they enjoyed seeing them grow and develop. We believed that the extensive experience within the care staff team, provided stability and security for young people, who were living away from their family. We also noted significant efforts by staff to engage young people in drama and music events, such as talent competitions, and this helped those taking part in preparations and competing in such events, to develop confidence in their own abilities.

We found that there were a range of meetings which took place, with representatives from all departments. For example, a whole staff team met to discuss a full agenda at the start of the new term, followed immediately by separate meetings, relevant to each staff group. We also noted that a frequent rotation of meetings continued for catering and domestic staff, this being an improvement since the last inspection, but this did not occur routinely for care staff. During our discussion with the manager at inspection feedback, we were told that care staff had identified how to maximise time available, to meet more regularly. The manager was keen to explore how this would work in practice and to try to embed routine opportunities for collective discussion and decision making. We felt that such opportunities were important to promote effective team working and will review progress at the next inspection.

We sampled evidence of staff supervision and found that some staff met regularly with their manager / supervisor, however, for many, there were significant gaps between meetings. We acknowledged that staff absence had impacted the time available to complete supervision tasks, but asked that as soon as possible, this critical support for social care staff, be re-established and that it occur in line with policy. Further to this, we asked the manager to explore formal supports for the lead worker with the catering team, as this member of the staff team had more recently taken up this role.

We were told by the manager, that staff training and development continued to be challenging due to the limited budget available. While we sympathised with the current situation, we encouraged the service to explore other ways of enhancing the skills and knowledge of staff. We suggested inviting colleagues from other local provision, to share their experiences of supporting young people or to consider how staff could visit other resources to learn and share effective ways of working. In line with expectations of the Scottish Social Services Council, Code of Practice for Employers of Social Service Workers, which states that employers must provide learning and development opportunities to enable staff to strengthen their skills and develop their knowledge, we asked that the service find creative ways to ensure a focus on continued professional development for care staff. We have made a recommendation regarding appropriate supports for staff development and will review progress at the next inspection. (see recommendation 1 under this quality theme).

While reviewing methods of communication used to share information between staff, as well as holding discussions with several members of the staff team, we became aware of a culture of verbally exchanging important information. We felt that in order to create increased accountability about information received and recorded, that the staff member who was directly involved, should be responsible for recording in the communication book. We felt that this was particularly important when sharing information of a critical nature, to ensure first hand information was recorded. We also felt that staff should be encouraged to use e-mail

communication to share information with colleagues, who in some instances, may not be in direct contact for some days. The manager should encourage an open culture, which helps to promote transparency and accountability from professionally registered employees who are expected to maintain high standards of recording and reporting, when caring for young people.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service should ensure that supportive arrangements are in place to promote individual and team development. Supervision, team meetings and training opportunities should operate effectively to enhance the skill and knowledge of staff.

National Care Standards, School Care Accommodation Services, Standard 7 – Management and staffing.

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

Upon review of quality assurance practices, improvement planning and consultation with all stakeholders, we concluded that the service should be awarded a grade of adequate for this quality theme.

Where we believed the service was working well, we found that there was consistent involvement by young people and their families, in reviewing and assessing the quality of experience for those living at the hostel. We found that well embedded consultation processes encouraged people using the service to provide their views and state how the hostel might improve. We found that young people could make suggestions for improvements through both formal and informal means, including the Pupil Council, Food Committee, an Ideas Wall located in communal space and through individual discussion with members of the staff team. Families were enabled to contribute through routine phone calls, attendance at Open Night, an event which takes place each year to welcome new young people to the hostel and service questionnaires which help to elicit their views. Comments from parents/carers included positive feedback about visiting the hostel, being shown around and confirming that they always feel welcomed, appreciate the study arrangements and hope that their children will continue to be encouraged to remain active and involved in the life of the hostel. The service intended to use this feedback to inform the development planning process.

Other strengths under this quality theme include the positive joint working relationships between the hostel and the school. As already mentioned, highly effective study arrangements support young people's education and development and regular communication between the manager and key education colleagues helped to provide a means of sharing important information to support young people's needs.

Although we felt that there were some key strengths evidenced during inspection, we concluded that a number of areas required the attention of the provider, manager and senior staff. These were:

- individualised support plans, including risk assessment, where necessary, must be updated to reflect the current circumstances of young people's lives. Plans should be proportionate to the needs of each young person, but should clearly outline how they are being supported to achieve positive outcomes which can be identified through key working, review meetings and other methods of involvement.
- the service should update the improvement plan, further to seeking and evaluating the views of all stakeholders. We recognised that this work would typically take place at the start of the new term, however due to staff absence, the service had been unable to progress this work. It is important for those living and working at the hostel to understand the key priorities for improvement and how they can influence positive change.
- the service should ensure that robust incident reporting and recording occurs each time there requires to be a detailed record of events. We were concerned that current arrangements for recording information were not sufficient and advised the service to review current practices and implement improved ways of working which safeguard all involved.
- the service should ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to support searches of young people's bedrooms, where clear risk assessment identifies the safety of young people may be at risk. By developing a clear approach to risk management, all staff will be expected to follow the correct procedure, where this becomes necessary.
- given the range of improvements highlighted during this inspection process, we advised of the need for closer involvement of external management. Throughout the inspection, we became aware that professional relationships between some members of the staff and management team, had become fractious and was impacting upon the effectiveness of positive team working. We strongly advised the provider to explore how current issues within the staff group can be resolved. It will be necessary to consider how the manager can be assisted to address areas for improvement, while focussing on improving standards and developing more positive working relationships with some colleagues.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 3 - adequate

What the service has done to meet any requirements we made at or since the last inspection

Previous requirements

There are no outstanding requirements.

What the service has done to meet any recommendations we made at or since the last inspection

Previous recommendations

There are no outstanding recommendations.

Complaints

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

Enforcement

No enforcement action has been taken against this care service since the last inspection.

Inspection and grading history

Date	Type	Gradings	
28 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
2 Oct 2015	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
18 Jan 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
15 Dec 2011	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
12 Nov 2010	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
4 Jun 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
7 Jan 2010	Announced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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