

Abbey Croft Care Home Service

Young Persons Residential Unit
Pennyburn Road
Kilwinning
KA13 6LF

Telephone: 01294 553159

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 12 March 2018

Service provided by:
North Ayrshire Council

Service provider number:
SP2003003327

Care service number:
CS2003001163

About the service

The service was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011. It is operated by North Ayrshire Council, whose mission statement says "we aim to provide a safe, nurturing, supportive, caring and trusting living environment for children and young people".

The accommodation is decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard. Outside areas are accessible and provide areas for children and young people to play and relax.

The service is registered to accommodate six children and young people. At the time of inspection, the service was accommodating eight children and young people; the service has applied for a variation to the Care Inspectorate to support the use of an additional two rooms as bedrooms. There is ongoing discussion with the Care Inspectorate in relation to the increased numbers of children and young people currently accommodated.

The service has a daytime staffing ratio of four staff, including a senior worker, on shift, though this could be increased if required. At night, the staffing complement at present is a minimum of two workers; this also included a senior staff member, numbers can also be increased if required.

This unannounced inspection was carried out following notifications from the service in relation to younger children being accommodated. The scope of the inspection focused on how younger children were accommodated within this model of care and the impact of this on the young people already accommodated. We have taken cognisance of the commitment of the management and staff team in supporting younger children within the service at short notice. In addition, we have discussed further options with the senior management team in relation to future placements of younger children within North Ayrshire children and young people services and offered support in relation to this.

What people told us

We spoke with four children and young people who were resident within the service. We observed positive interactions between staff, children and young people. Staff were fully committed to ensuring younger children were nurtured and cared for during their stay, and very good interactions were observed. Staff presented as respectful, positive and nurturing throughout the inspection.

Discussions included the impact of younger children accommodated within the service, staffing levels, house moves and the recent service review.

Children and young people were happy to chat and show us about their home.

We also spoke with a Who Cares Scotland representative who was visiting the house to speak with young people.

At this inspection, we did not speak to any relatives of young people.

Self assessment

The service has not been asked by the Care Inspectorate to complete a self-assessment prior to the inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	not assessed
Quality of management and leadership	3 - Adequate

What the service does well

Staff and management team worked quickly to bring together key information in relation to the individual needs of younger children. Discussions with the staff and management team highlighted how they positively evaluated, assessed and adjusted aspects of the service to suit the differing support needs required when accommodating younger children. When reviewing the information available for younger children, we found it supported some aspects of their specific health, well-being and safety needs.

During the inspection, a specific nurture plan was developed which focused on younger children's consistency of care, bed and bath time routines, school pick ups and drop offs, daily activities and opportunities to play and have fun. Meal times were reviewed to support the needs of younger children and opportunities were available to eat meals in quieter areas and at different times of the day. We found that, although plans had been put in place, this was not consistent for every young child who had attended the service. Risk assessment information, although available, was not in-depth enough to support some of the specific needs of younger children residing.

The deployment of staff was reviewed in relation to the support needs of younger children. The balance of female to male staff was considered and a core team of staff were deployed to link with younger children on a one to one basis. One sessional staff member with a background in early learning and childcare was also available. Discussions with the staff team highlighted their commitment, expertise and skill when supporting younger children within the service.

When we looked at staff ratios for the period that younger children were living in the service, we found there was not always sufficient staffing to fully support the therapeutic needs of young people.

Young people commented positively on how they played and connected with younger children when staying in the service. At times, they self-regulated behaviours and were also insightful in relation to supporting younger children while staying in this model of communal living. Young people's meeting minutes highlighted that they felt at times there was too many children and young people and not enough staff, this had an impact on one to one support opportunities between young people and staff.

Team meeting minutes highlighted how the staff and management team worked collaboratively to ensure the needs of both young children and young people were met. At times, this could be a challenge; we noted that during weekends, some young people needed increased individual time with staff to support them to manage trauma based behaviour.

Staff were very skilled at protecting young children from behaviours that could have been upsetting; however, at times, this could not be prevented.

Transition arrangements for younger children moving on had been arranged, although within a short timescale, visits had been made and contacts established which supported a nurturing approach to moving on.

Discussions with the manager and senior manager of the service, highlighted that some informal evaluation had taken place in relation to the impact on young people when placing younger children within the service. Evaluations were found to be appropriate, reflective and supported the specific needs of all children and young people. A formal evaluation process would have enabled a fuller assessment of the impact on children and young people when placing younger children.

What the service could do better

Although the staff and management team ensured younger children were supported, cared for and protected during their stay, we found that a more in-depth support plan reflecting the national GIRFEC framework would have supported the placement of younger children within the service more fully. Access to Care First for children and young people services and further developments in relation to strengthening links with placement social workers and fostering and adoption services are planned.

Through discussion, the provider confirmed a review of service provision, ensuring services are more aligned with the specific needs of children and young people. Staffing levels must also be sufficient to ensure that children and young people receive one to one support when needed and that their therapeutic needs are met.
(Refer to requirement 1)

During the inspection process, one young person moved on from the service taking the numbers of children and young people accommodated down to seven. Through discussion, senior managers confirmed that refurbishment plans had been passed for bedroom renovations and that the numbers of children and young people accommodated would be monitored until the refurbishment had been completed. This requirement was made at the service's last inspection and will be reviewed at the service's next inspection.
(Refer to requirement 2)

Requirements

Number of requirements: 2

1. The provider must ensure that the placement of children and young people within children's houses is supported with a robust plan that puts the child or young person at the centre. Staffing levels must reflect the individual needs of the children and young people living within the house.

This is to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI/2011) Regulations 4, Welfare of Users, (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

Timescale: 30 June 2018.

2. The provider must ensure that, when a child or young person is admitted to the service on an emergency basis and this results in the service exceeding the number of registered places, the "Emergency Relaxation of Conditions on Numbers - Residential Care Homes for Children and Young People - Care Inspectorate Policy" is adhered to.

This is to comply with: The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI/2011) Regulations 4, Welfare of Users, (a) make proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of service users.

Timescale: 30 June 2018.

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
26 Jun 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
12 Apr 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership Not assessed
21 Apr 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
16 Apr 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
13 May 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
9 Jan 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
24 Oct 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good

Date	Type	Gradings
18 Jan 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
9 Sep 2011	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
2 Dec 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
24 Sep 2010	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 5 - Very good
26 Mar 2010	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed
24 Nov 2009	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment Not assessed Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership Not assessed
3 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
27 May 2008	Announced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good

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