

Aberlour Sycamore Services - Lochan Cottage Care Home Service

Lochyside
Fort William
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Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

10 July 2018

Service provided by:

Aberlour Child Care Trust.

Service provider number:

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Service no:

CS2017354213

About the service

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Aberlour Sycamore Services, Lochan Cottage, is a care home for children and young people based in Fort William. The service is part of the larger organisation, Aberlour Child Care Trust.

The service registered with the Care Inspectorate in March 2017 to provide care for a maximum of five children aged between 12 years and 18 years.

The main aims of the service are:

To provide opportunities for development and growth within a safe, therapeutic environment.

'To build self-esteem and self-worth, giving children and young people the belief that they can achieve and be successful in their future'.

What people told us

We spoke with various people during the course of this inspection. We spoke with all young people who were at home when we visited. We took account of the feedback we received in questionnaires that had been completed by young people and returned directly to us. We were told by young people that they were OK living at Lochan Cottage and that they thought most of the staff were OK too. Comments noted included the following:

- 'I get on well with my keyworker'.
- 'I think..... banter is great'.
- 'I get on with most of the staff here and some are nicer than others'.
- 'I think the food is good and is a good cook'.
- 'I can speak to some staff more than others but that's fine'.
- 'I don't think I should have to go to school'.
- 'I think there are too many times when some people are kicking off'.
- 'Bad behaviour from some young people. Disruptive, risk taking not being dealt with'.

Placing social workers we spoke with were, in the main, satisfied with the service being provided. Comments noted included the following:

- 'I think since the new manager has settled in things are getting better'.
- 'I am not sure if all the staff are working in a consistent way'.
- 'I am made to feel welcome when I visit and am always offered a cup of coffee'.
- 'I am not sure if all staff are confident about dealing with crisis when it arises. I appreciate that this has been a very difficult time for them and think things are more settled now'.
- 'I have no concerns about the care is receiving from the staff at Lochan Cottage. has done really well and I know she is very attached to some of the staff team'.
- 'This has not been an easy time and I do hope things settle down'.
- 'I usually get weekly reports about how ... is getting on but more recently this has slipped'.

Self assessment

We did not request a self-assessment in this inspection year.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of care and support as Adequate. A grade of Adequate is where there are some strengths but these just outweigh weaknesses. Strengths may still have a positive impact but the likelihood of achieving positive outcomes for people is reduced because key areas of performance need to improve.

STRENGTHS

Care Plans (the My Plan) was in place for all young people. The My Plan document contained relevant information and young people had been involved when it was created.

The My Plan was updated when there were changes, or when individual goals had been met. Young people were aware that they had a right to access the My Plan if they wanted.

Risk assessments were in place for all young people. Risk assessments were thorough and clearly guided staff of the procedures and protocols to be followed. For example, when young people went missing, absconded, police intervention, or any child protection concerns.

The child protection policies and procedures that were in place were robust. Staff were aware of what to do if there were child protection concerns. Any notifications that required to be submitted to us when there were child protection concerns, were submitted timeously and provided us with a detailed account of the procedures followed. We were satisfied with the procedures and practices in place to ensure young people were protected.

All young people were registered with local health care professionals. Any specialist health care services were identified. However, the service found this to be an area that needed to be improved on and were in talks with the health care professionals to remedy delays.

Young people were encouraged to lead a healthy lifestyle, eat healthy food and take part in activities.

Young people had a choice of food and they decided the menu for the week. Some young people assisted with the cooking and mealtimes took place at the dining table in the kitchen. Mealtimes were considered an important part of the day and provided an opportunity for staff and young people to talk informally about the days events.

Young people looked comfortable in the presence of staff. Young people told us that most of the staff were "OK".

Young people had access to independent Advocacy Services and they were aware of the Who Cares? Scotland worker who visited the service.

Young people who had left school were encouraged to take part in a skills based activity and one young person had gained a part-time job with a local employer.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Impact Assessments were completed when a referral was made. The Impact Assessment is there to identify any strengths, barriers, impact on the young person, other young people already accommodated in the service and the service itself.

However, although an Impact Assessment had been carried out prior to admission, placements went ahead sooner than planned and this had affected the service **(See Requirement 1)**.

It was clear from the Notifications we received from the service that there had been an escalation in disruptive incidents, absconding, police involvement and serious concerns about the safety, health and wellbeing of some young people. This resulted in very poor outcomes for young people. **(See Requirement 1)**

Not all young people had been accommodated with full background information and this made it very difficult for the service to assess the service that could be provided. **(See Requirement 1)**

Some young people were still not in receipt of education and although efforts had been made by the service to find a suitable educational package, this had not been secured. **(See Recommendation 1)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 1

1. The service provider, Aberlour Sycamore Services, immediately on receipt of this report, must ensure that prior to any young person being accommodated this is done (whenever possible) in a planned way.

The service provider should continue to carry out Impact Assessments and these should identify the impact the placement will have on the young person, other young people and the service itself. The service provider should continue to liaise with the placing authority and stress the reasons why a placement should not be made.

The service provider should continue to gain all relevant information about young people prior to being accommodated and should highlight to the placing authority when this is not done. **(See Requirement 1)**

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that,

"If I experience care and support in a group, the overall size and composition of that group is right for me" (HSCS 1.8)

"My care and support is provided in a planned and safe way, including if there is an emergency or unexplained event" (HSCS 4:14)

"I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources (HSCS 4:27) and to comply with:

Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) 2011 - No 210, Regulation 4(1)(a). Children's Welfare. A regulation which ensures proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of young people.

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service provider should continue to liaise with education and explore ways to influence positive change for young people who are entitled to receive education.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "I am supported to achieve my potential in education and employment if this is right for me" (HSCS 1.27).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of environment as Very Good. This evaluation applies to performance that demonstrates major strengths in supporting positive outcomes for young people.

There are very few areas for improvement and those that do exist will have minimal adverse impact on people's experiences and outcomes. While opportunities are taken to strive for excellence within a culture of continuous improvement, performance evaluated as very good does not require significant adjustment.

STRENGTHS

We found at this inspection that the quality of the environment remained very good. We found that there had been some improvements made to the environment in keeping with continuous improvement.

The garden areas had been improved on and contained some nice pieces of garden furniture. This enabled young people and staff to enjoy the outdoor experience and take advantage of good weather.

A paddling pool had been purchased and we were shown photographs of young people enjoying this. Staff had also taken part in this activity and it was clear that all were enjoying the experience.

The inside of the house continued to have a homely feel. The lounge area was used by young people to chill out and watch television.

The kitchen area was well used by young people and young people were encouraged and did sit at the large dining table for meals. We joined young people at mealtime and we saw that this was also used as an opportunity for staff to chat informally to young people.

Young people were very comfortable in the surroundings and told us that they liked the lay out of the house. However, some mentioned that they did not use the upstairs lounge and stressed that this was their choice.

Young people's bedrooms were decorated in accordance with their wishes. Young people told us that they liked their bedrooms. Young people were consulted if new furniture was purchased and their opinions were taken seriously.

The house was kept clean and tidy and any damage to the house was quickly sorted.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Young people spoken with said that they were not too keen to use the upstairs lounge. The service provider may want to further discuss with young people and find out why.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of staffing as Good. An evaluation of good applies to performance where there is a number of important strengths, which taken together, outweigh areas for improvement.

The strengths will have a positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes, which are as positive as possible.

STRENGTHS

Additional staff training had been carried out in relation to many areas, including challenging behaviour. Staff training was discussed during one to one supervision and areas that required to be refreshed were identified. Future staff training dates had been set.

New staff had been recruited safely and completed their induction. All new staff had received training in Crisis, Anger, Management Limitation (CALMS) prior to working with young people.

Staff were now receiving regular and quality one to one supervision. Supervision was used as a reflection period for staff and staff told us that they found this useful.

Regular staff meetings were held and these were used as a forum for staff to express their views. Staff meetings were also used to discuss specific young people and provided peer support for workers.

Staff were registered with the appropriate body. The Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC). Newly recruited staff were informed of the need to register with the SSSC within a six month period.

Staff we spoke with knew about the young people they cared for. Staff had a good insight into the needs of young people.

Staff encouraged young people to take part in activities and stressed the importance of education.

We observed staff's interaction with young people on all our visits and we found this to be very positive. Young people were comfortable in the presence of the staff team. For example, an appropriate use of humour. Young people told us that they got on well with most of the staff and that some were better than others. Young people told us that they had a good relationship with their keyworker and that they were able to speak to them if they were troubled.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Despite the many challenges, we found that staff were working hard to establish clear expectations and routines for young people.

Staff had succeeded in reducing the frequency of absconding and the intensity of challenging and aggressive behaviour. This showed a commitment by staff to rebuild the relationships with young people, after periods of high physical and emotional stress.

The current, settled, nature of the house has enabled staff to spend quality time with young people, rather than leaping from one crisis to another. Staff moral had improved and staff now felt a sense of purpose. However, the management team need to continue to monitor this to ensure that, at all times of crisis the staff team are being supported and listened to. **(See Recommendation 1)**

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 1

1. The service provider, Aberlour Sycamore Services, monitor and observe staff to ensure that all additional training has been effective and is embedded in practice and to monitor staff moral, particularly at times of crisis to ensure this has not been affected.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that, "I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, and are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes" (HSCS 3.14) and "People have time to support and care for me and speak with me" (HSCS 3.16) and: "My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well" (HSCS 3.19).

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We graded the quality of management and leadership as Good. An evaluation of good applies to performance where there is a number of important strengths which taken together outweigh areas for improvement.

The strengths will have a positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. However, improvements are required to maximise wellbeing and ensure that people consistently have experiences and outcomes which are as positive as possible.

STRENGTHS

The manager and the deputy manager of the service were making good progress to address the areas for improvement that we highlighted at our previous inspection.

Quality Assurance Systems were now being fully implemented and evaluated, to gain an overview about the quality of service provision and identify areas that required to be improved.

Staff meetings were being held on a regular basis and ways to ensure all staff attended were being considered. Minutes of staff meetings were recorded and actions taken where areas for improvement were identified. Staff thought the meetings had improved and found this to be a safe forum for discussion about any concerns.

Staff were receiving regular supervision. Staff found this to be supportive and useful and enable them to reflect on their practice.

All incidents were being recorded and where necessary, full debriefs carried out with staff and young people.

Good progress had been made to establish working relationships with other agencies, this included police and education.

The manager of the service had a clear vision of where the service needed to be improved.

AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT

The manager and deputy manager should gain and evaluate feedback from stakeholders to gain an insight into how others view the service being provided.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 - good

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

Previous requirements

Requirement 1

Aberlour Sycamore Services must ensure that there is adequate educational packages in place for all young people. In order to achieve this the service provider must:

- (a) Ensure that prior to the placement of young people there is an educational package in place.
- (b) Ensure that all necessary meetings are held, prior to the placement, to ensure that the educational package is adequate and sustainable.
- (c) Ensure that when the education of young people is highlighted as a concern, swifter, remedial action is taken, to ensure this is addressed and alternative measures put in place, to ensure young people's educational attainment is not being affected.

This is in order to comply with:

Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) 2011 – No 210, Regulation 4(1)(a). Children's Welfare. A regulation which ensures proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of young people and National Care Standards, Care Homes for children and Young People. Standard 4.1: Support arrangements.

The service provider must review the provision of education to young people and ensure that each receives sufficient educational input and support to enable them to achieve their academic potential.

Timescale: Immediate.

This requirement was made on 20 December 2017.

Action taken on previous requirement

Progress is being made with education for young people placed at Lochan Cottage. The service has developed strong links with the local school and meetings are being held in relation to young people who are not attending school. Prior to the most recent child being accommodated education provision was put in place. We will not repeat this requirement. However, we have highlighted this in Requirement 1 as needing to be improved on.

Met – outwith timescales

Requirement 2

Aberlour Sycamore Services must ensure that young people must receive behavioural management, care and support in line with their needs and good practice guidance. In order to achieve this the service provider must:

- (a) Ensure that young people have clear rules and boundaries about what is acceptable behaviour and what is not.
- (b) Provide additional training to staff on effective ways to deal with challenging behaviour.
- (c) Ensure that any sanctions in place are effective.

(d) Ensure that prior to any placement young people and all other relevant people receive full information about the service to be provided, any rules and boundaries that are in place.

This is in order to comply with:

Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) 2011 – No 210, Regulation 4(1)(a). Children's welfare – a regulation which ensures proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of children. Regulation 15 (a). Staffing – a regulation which ensures staff receives training for the work they are to perform and that they are competent to provide such care and National Care Standards, Care Homes for Children and Young People. Standard 7.8 and 7.9: Management and staffing.

Timescale: Immediate.

This requirement was made on 20 December 2017.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has been met. There is now an information booklet in place, which informs young people as to the expected behaviour. Staff have carried out additional training in relation to challenging behaviour. More detailed information is being received prior to young people being accommodated.

Met – within timescales

Requirement 3

Aberlour Sycamore Services must ensure that young people are discouraged from smoking and all health and safety measures put in place to ensure there is no additional risk presented to young people.

In order to achieve this the service provider must:

- (a) Involve external agencies such as Smoking Cessation to educate young people about the dangers of smoking.
- (b) Ensure that smoking is not seen as a social activity.
- (c) Reduce the risk of fire by ensuring that cigarettes and lighters are not with young people when they retire for the night.

This is in order to comply with:

Scottish Statutory Instrument (SSI) 2011 – No 210, Regulation 4(1)(a). Children's welfare – a regulation which ensures proper provision for the health, welfare and safety of children. Regulation 15 (a). Staffing – a regulation which ensures staff receives training for the work they are to perform and that they are competent to provide such care and National Care Standards, Care Homes for Children and Young People. Standard 7.8 and 7.9: Management and staffing.

Timescale: (a) and (b) within 3 months of receipt of this report. (c) with immediate effect.

This requirement was made on 20 December 2017.

Action taken on previous requirement

Progress has been made to meet this requirement. Smoking cessation agencies have visited the house. Young people are being discouraged from going out in groups to smoke and, in the main, cigarettes and lighters are being handed in at bedtime.

Met - within timescales**Requirement 4**

Aberlour Sycamore Services must ensure that all quality assurance systems are carried out.

In order to achieve this the service provider must:

- (a) Ensure that all records of incidents are recorded and evaluated.
- (b) Ensure that all records of non authorised absences are recorded and evaluated.
- (c) Ensure that all records of accidents are recorded and evaluated.
- (d) Ensure that all feedback from other agencies is recorded and evaluated.

This is to comply with:

The Social Care and Social Work Improvement Scotland (Requirements for Care Services) Regulations 2011 (SSI 2011/210), Regulation 4(1)(a) Welfare of users.

Timescale: Immediate.

This requirement was made on 20 December 2017.

Action taken on previous requirement

This requirement has been met. All incidents are recorded and evaluated. All non authorised absences are recorded and evaluated and debriefs carried out with staff and young people involved in incidents.

Met - within timescales

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	
1 Mar 2018	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
15 Nov 2017	Announced (short notice)	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak

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