

Action for Children - Gilmerton Road Outreach Services Support Service

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Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 17 November 2016

Service provided by:
Action for Children

Service provider number:
SP2003002604

Care service number:
CS2007144549

About the service

The Gilmerton Road Outreach Service is provided by Action For Children and supports families from Edinburgh and the Lothians.

It is linked to a residential respite service and is based in the shared office premises in Gilmerton Road in Edinburgh. Most families use both the respite and outreach services.

Staff work across both services.

At the time of the inspection the service was involved in providing a range of levels of outreach support to 16 young people and their families.

This service has been registered since 2008.

What people told us

We spoke with nine parents/carers by telephone.

Views about the service were predominately very positive.

In response to the statement, "How do you rate the service overall", one respondent stated "average", one stated "10 out of 10", one stated "very good", one stated "I rate it highly", one stated "professional", one stated "amazing" and three respondents stated "excellent".

In response to the question "Does he/she enjoy time with the worker?", three respondents stated "yes", one stated "he does", one stated "I think so", one stated "happy to go", one stated "loves it" and one respondent stated "he enjoys time with them - great". One respondent did not reply.

Three respondents were not clear as to who their key worker was and two respondents commented on difficulties contacting the manager.

One respondent stated that outreach sessions had occasionally been cancelled at short notice.

One respondent had concerns regarding systems for managing medication. We saw that the service managed medication appropriately. The system should be re-explained to the parent/carer.

Comments included:

"staffing is really good - always enough staff on".

"they do an absolutely wonderful job".

"(young person) looks forward to going".

"communication is excellent - always contact if there are any issues".

"it is great".

"(management and staff) are excellent - look after (young person) incredibly well".

"(management and staff) are very good - they have a good understanding of (young person)".

"(management and staff) are excellent - hats off to them".

"can't get contact with the manager".

"(manager) failed to respond to telephone calls".

"they do a really good job".

"a port of call for help".

"sometimes clothes come back that do not belong to (young person)".

"staff are very good and helpful - helps us an awful lot in being able to cope".

"confident he will be cared for whilst in their care".

"excellent - don't know what I'd do without it".

"amazing - support is really good".

"do a good job in my opinion".

"a very good service".

"found them (staff) to be professional and approachable".

"amazing support - a really good service".

One placing social worker replied to our request for their views.

They were very positive about all aspects of the service but did comment upon the apparent high level of staff turnover and the short notice cancellation of outreach sessions.

Comments included:

"they do a very good job".

"communication is good".

"service users and families speak highly of the service".

Self assessment

The self assessment was fully completed and described the service's strengths while identifying areas for improvement.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

What the service does well

We looked at two Quality Themes at this inspection; "Care and Support" and "Staffing".

We found that the service provided very good outreach care and support to young people and their families. All the young people also received residential respite care from the service. **(See inspection report on "Action for Children - Edinburgh", dated 5 May 2016).**

Staff worked very hard to ensure that young people experienced their outreach time as positive.

We found very good planning arrangements were in place to maximise support to young people and their families. We saw that very good assessment information was gathered from parents/carers prior to admission to the service. This ensured that staff had a very good knowledge of young people's needs, likes and dislikes prior to commencement of service. Staff demonstrated a very good understanding of the needs of individuals and how they could best be met.

We saw that complex issues were comprehensively documented and there was good, clear guidance for staff to support their care of the individual young person.

We saw that each young person had a personal plan which outlined their needs and how they would be met. Personal plans were designed to encourage learning and maximise independence, for example in areas such as eating and transport. Personal plans incorporated the SHANARRI (safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, responsible, respected and included) wellbeing indicators from Getting it Right For Every Child (GIRFEC). This meant that young people were able to progress in clearly defined areas.

Staff used a variety of communication methods, including Talking Mats, PECS, visual timetables and sign-along. This enabled young people to make choices regarding activities, food and personal hygiene routines.

Outings were a central part of the outreach programme. This included trips to the Zoo, East Links Family Park, swimming, bowling, local parks, soft play, walks and visits to restaurants. There was a very good focus on balancing "fun" and activities with personal improvement goals ("desired outcomes"), for example meal times, toileting routines and travel.

The service had access to a psychologist two days a week. He was available for consultation regarding individual young people and their support plans.

Management and staff presented as skilled, knowledgeable and committed to their work with young people and families.

A key worker system was in place that ensured effective overview of care planning and care delivery.

We saw that medication was well-managed within the service.

Staff had access to a full training programme that included sign-a-long, epilepsy, medication, play therapy, supervision and sexual health. Some staff had received first aid training. All staff were trained to a level that allowed registration with the Scottish Social Services Council (SSSC).

Staff had received training in a method for safely holding young people ("Pro Act Skip") who exhibited challenging behaviour or who were sometimes unable to fully control their actions. This meant that staff could safely intervene in difficult or stressful circumstances to ensure everyone's wellbeing.

The service was held in high regard by parents/carers.

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 a CSE policy was in place and that staff were to undertake training in February 2017. Staff members we spoke with were knowledgeable about their child protection responsibilities and safe care in general.

What the service could do better

Whilst all the staff we spoke with stated that they felt supported in their work and that they received regular supervision, one returned questionnaire stated that they had not been receiving regular supervision. This view should be explored.

Staff had access to a full training programme. However, one staff member stated that they had no training in the last year. This view should be explored.

Due to staff shortages, agreed staffing levels had not always been maintained in recent months. Three new members of staff were due to commence employment shortly and further recruitment was being progressed at inspection.

Staff meetings were held only twice a year. We discussed with the manager the benefits of holding these meetings more frequently.

We discussed with the manager how the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators might be more explicit within personal plans.

One parent/carers highlighted that some outreach sessions had been cancelled at short notice. The manager was confident that this would improve once new staff were in post.

Some parents/carers were not clear as to who their key worker was. The manager stated that he would ensure that each parent/carer was informed as to who their key worker was.

Two parent/carers expressed a view that they found it difficult to contact the manager. The manager told us that he was available to talk with parents/carers. To this end, he had included his contact details in a recent letter that had been sent to parent/carers.

One parent/carer stated that clothes not belonging to their child were returned to them. Laundry arrangements should be reviewed.

We discussed with the manager the desirability of reinstating the parent/carer meeting as a further way of improving communication and service user participation.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 5

1. The parent/carer meeting should be reinstated.

National Care Standards Care Homes for Children and Young People – Standard 4: Support Arrangements.

2. The manager should ensure that;

- (a) agreed staffing levels are maintained and
- (b) that outreach is not cancelled at short notice.

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

3. SHANARRI wellbeing indicators should be more explicit within personal plans.

National Care Standards Support Services – Standard 4: Support Arrangements.

4. The staff meeting should take place more often.

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

5. The manager should ensure that;

- (a) all staff receive regular one to one supervision and
- (b) all staff have access to training and development opportunities.

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	
12 Dec 2013	Unannounced	Care and support	4 - Good
		Environment	5 - Very good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
3 Dec 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
28 Jan 2010	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	Not assessed
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed

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