Wheatlands
Care Home Service

Wheatlands House
Lee Brae
Galashiels
TD1 1QR

Telephone: 01896 750207

Type of inspection: Unannounced
Inspection completed on: 10 October 2017

Service provided by:
Scottish Borders Council

Service provider number:
SP2003001976

Care service number:
CS2008175229
**About the service**

This service transferred registration to the Care Inspectorate on 1 April 2011.

Wheatlands is registered as a care home for children and young people. It can care for a maximum of 5 young people between the ages of 12 and 18 years. It is run by Scottish Borders Council, providing residential care for young people who are assessed as requiring medium to long-term care. It is the Council’s only children’s home in the Scottish Borders.

Wheatlands is situated in Galashiels, on a main bus route, not very far from the town centre. It is a detached Victorian building with public areas and a staff office on the ground floor, and bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs. Young people have access to a comfortable lounge, a games room, a dining kitchen and outdoor space. Its mission statement is:

‘Wheatlands will provide high quality childcare for all young people accommodated here. We aim to do this by providing a safe, caring, supportive environment which enables individuals to progress towards and reach their full potential’.

**What people told us**

During this inspection, we spoke with four of the young people who were living at the home. All of the young people we spoke to told us they liked staying at Wheatlands. They were very complimentary about the staff who they said they got along well with. They told us about their successes and how staff had helped them to achieve. All of them identified staff who they were close to and who they could speak to, if they were worried. One of the young people told us that he would stay at Wheatlands for as long as he possibly could. He told us he considered it to be his home and it was an excellent place to live.

We received four completed Care Standard Questionnaires (CSQs). In response to the statement ‘Overall, I am happy with the care I get here’; two young people strongly agreed and two agreed.

Responses to the CSQs indicted that some young people were unclear about what a care plan was and if they had one. However, when we spoke to the young people during the inspection they all told us they had a plan for their future and were clear about what they were aiming for.

**Self assessment**

The service had not been asked to complete a self assessment in advance of the inspection. We discussed their own improvement plans and quality assurance systems which identified their priorities for development and how they were monitoring of the quality of the provision within the service.

**From this inspection we graded this service as:**

- **Quality of care and support**: 6 - Excellent
- **Quality of environment**: 6 - Excellent
- **Quality of staffing**: not assessed
- **Quality of management and leadership**: not assessed
What the service does well

The young people we spoke with told us that they felt comfortable and safe living at Wheatlands.

We assessed that the quality of care and support for young people who used this service was excellent. Many of the young people had stayed at the home for a long time. They were very comfortable and relaxed and enjoyed very positive and respectful relationships with the staff who worked there.

We saw staff having encouraging conversations with young people where they sensitively provided advice and direction whilst actively listening to the thoughts, opinions and ideas of the young people.

The day-to-day activities, rhythms and routines supported a culture of calmness and normality where everyone knew what was required of them, both in their behaviours and actions. Staff had high but realistic expectations of the young people and they responded very well to this approach. This positive approach also included incentives to achieve such as getting driving lessons to gain a driving licence and addition to activity money for making positive choices.

The young people told us that they enjoyed lots of activities both within the home and in the local community. Staff supported them in their chosen hobbies and offered new experiences, whenever possible. Staff were very much involved alongside young people, bowling, go-karting, fishing and zip wires being a few of the recent activities. We heard about the formation of a football team which included staff, young people, siblings of young people staying at the home and past residents. The staff had helped the team to gain strip sponsorship to get them team strips which then increased team morale and self-esteem. We heard that when young people put forward suggestions, if it was possible, then it happened. Examples of this included, getting a film channel on the TV in the sitting-room and going on holiday to the Lake District and a ‘skyden tree house’.

We saw that young people received an excellent level of care and support on a day-to-day basis. All of the young people had care plans which identified their hopes and aspirations and provided strategies for staff to use to help them to achieve. Individual young people were helped and encouraged to organise routines which would help them to develop self-care and independence skills.

Staff provided practical help to enable young people to learn to shop and cook for themselves. Other daily chores, such as doing their laundry and keeping their room clean and tidy, were encouraged and staff helped when necessary. In addition, young people were happily included in gardening and painting tasks.

We saw some very good outcomes for young people in relation to education and employment. All of the young people were encouraged to attend and achieve their potential whether this was at school, college or work experience setting. Staff ensured they had the correct clothing and equipment to fully participate in learning or employment and helped young people to plan journeys and problem solve any barriers they faced.

All young people were linked to health services to enable them to access appointments and check-ups, as they were needed. Staff were able to demonstrate a very good knowledge of health related agencies which could provide advice, guidance and support for young people in relation to their wellbeing. Systems were in place to store and administer medication for young people and staff were aware of relevant policies relating to this. Healthy lifestyle choices were encouraged by staff which enabled young people to make informed decisions about their health and fitness.

At this inspection, we saw that an appropriate system for recording incidents was in place and incidents were being recorded effectively. Changes to the incident form had helped staff to focus better on risk assessment.
Wheatlands is a very attractive building set in its own grounds. It is maintained to a high standard and provides comfortable accommodation for the young people.

There is a calm and welcoming atmosphere within the home. Young people and staff regularly sit around the kitchen table to chat. The kitchen is the hub of the home and young people are free to make themselves snacks and drinks when they want to. We saw that young people were offered drinks when staff were having one and equally young people offered to make drinks for the staff. This respectful role modelling was seen throughout the inspection.

Young people all had their own bedrooms which provided private space. The rooms were decorated to the young people’s tastes and preferences. Communal rooms were comfortable, clean and tidy whilst feeling homely and lived in, with permission to relax. We saw evidence of young peoples’ interest such as guitars, rugby balls and games consoles which were well used by young people.

A plan for regular refurbishment and upgrading was in place in order to keep the home to a high standard. The kitchen had seen some refurbishment and plans were in place to upgrade one of the bathrooms and some windows.

What the service could do better

Wheatlands have continued to progress and improve. They continue to provide excellent care to young people in the Borders. The management team are clear about their vision for the future of the service ad how they can make improvement.

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

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