

Edinburgh Secure Services Secure Accommodation Service

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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

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Service provided by:
City of Edinburgh Council

Service provider number:
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Service no:
CS2003010921

About the service

Edinburgh Secure Services is provided by the City of Edinburgh Council. It is registered to provide secure care and accommodation to young people between the ages of 10 and 17 years.

The secure service is provided in Braid Unit, a six-bedded unit located at the Howdenhall Centre on the outskirts of Edinburgh.

The accommodation for the young people is in single bedrooms and includes en suite shower and toilet facilities with appropriate fixtures and fittings. There is a comfortable living room, dining room, a spacious recreation room, and a smaller sitting room for one-to-one activities. Young people have access to a gymnasium and a secure outdoor courtyard for physical activities.

The stated aims of the service are "to provide for young people, whose behaviours pose a serious risk to themselves or others, a safe, secure, supportive, and stimulating environment in which they will achieve their full potential, develop respect for themselves and for others, and be assisted in gaining an understanding of the attitude, skills, and knowledge that will enable them to return safely to their communities".

At the time of the inspection, five young people were staying in Braid Unit.

This service has been registered since 1 April 2002.

The Care Inspectorate is a member of the <https://www.nationalpreventivemechanism.org.uk/> a group of organisations designated to monitor the treatment and conditions of those people who have been deprived of their liberty. This includes children and young people in Secure Care.

What people told us

During the inspection, we met with four of the five young people who were currently living in the service.

All four said that they felt safe, and that bullying wasn't tolerated. They also commented that staff were quick to challenge swearing, and that discussion about their own or other young people's circumstances was not allowed. All said that staff respected their privacy.

Young people had had different experiences of being involved in care planning, with some feeling that they had been fully involved and consulted, while others said that they didn't know what was happening, and that they weren't given information when they asked. One commented that they had had really good support from some staff.

All but one said that the food was good.

All young people appreciated the regular opportunities for football in the courtyard, but most said that they were sometimes bored, and that there could be more activities.

Some young people commented that they felt that they shouldn't have to earn privileges on admission, and felt that they should be trusted, and have privileges removed if they did something wrong.

We received three completed questionnaires from young people. All three "agreed" or "strongly agreed" that they were happy overall with the quality of the service they received.

Self assessment

A self assessment form was not required for this inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

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

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

We found that the service provided a safe, caring environment, with a good balance of care and control. Young people all said that they felt safe, and that bullying wasn't tolerated.

The atmosphere in the unit was calm. We had lunch with young people and staff, which was a relaxed, sociable experience.

Staff worked in partnership with social workers to help young people to progress. There was evidence of good communication and regular planning meetings. Young people and their families were encouraged to attend and to actively participate in the plans which were being made.

Written plans had improved since the last inspection, with some clearly defined goals and notes of actions and progress. The service needed to continue to develop the quality of this approach.

Plans could be further improved by making sure that all of the SHANARRI wellbeing indicators were considered and reviewed. While we acknowledge that key areas of need and intervention should be identified and prioritised, an overview of all wellbeing indicators would help to ensure that other important areas are included in the plan. For example, we found that for some young people there was an absence of information about how they could be supported to be more active.

There were well-established links with community-based health services, and good evidence to show that young people had been helped to catch up with outstanding appointments which had had a positive impact on their health. Unfortunately, we also found that on occasion, appointments had been postponed due to there being insufficient staff to accompany the young person, particularly where they required a high staff presence due to security issues. (We have made a recommendation about this under Quality of staffing)

There were also some deficits in the system for managing young people's medication, with a lack of precision in recording, and a potential error in administration of medication as a result of this. The system for auditing medication was not robust enough to pick this up. While we would usually make a formal requirement of the service to address such deficits, the manager took immediate and appropriate action to address this matter.

(See recommendation 1.)

Some case records reflected a lack of understanding of how some conditions (for example ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder)) might affect young people's behaviour, and pointed to a need for further training in this key area. This was in contrast to some very effective and sensitive work having been done, using alternative therapies to help young people relax and sleep better.

Risk assessments were in place to support young people inside the unit and when on approved leave. While these were clear and detailed, we felt that they could be improved by incorporating more details about how young people could be helped to avoid an escalation of emotions which could result in more challenging behaviour. For example, we found some good examples of this approach detailed in the school risk assessments, and since both parts of the service worked closely, it would seem to be relevant to make the most of shared approaches to promoting positive behaviour. **(See recommendation 2.)** We also thought that there should be specific risk assessments and risk management plans in place in relation to CSE (Child Sexual Exploitation).

The service had continued to maintain a low level of physical restraint. Incidents were well-recorded, with clear evidence of management oversight and analysis.

There were some good examples of positive outcomes for young people in terms of their health and achievements, for example by taking opportunities to gain national qualifications leading to work experience. When young people were moving on from the service, transitions were well-planned and well-supported.

In conclusion, we found that the service provided safe and (mostly) nurturing care which was effective in helping young people to develop strategies for managing the challenges they faced. However, as a priority, the service needed to improve its practice in relation to the management of medication, and by making sure that young people are able to attend medical appointments promptly.

In view of the need for improvement in these key areas, we have graded the Quality of care and support as 3 - adequate.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The service must make sure that systems for supporting young people with their medication are effectively implemented at all times. In order to achieve this, the service should review staff practice, provide training and improve the quality of audits.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance, and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

2. The service should develop risk assessments to include more information about how young people could be helped to avoid an escalation of emotions which could result in more challenging behaviour.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that 'I am supported to communicate in a way that is right for me, at my own pace, by people who are sensitive to me and my needs' (HSCS 2.8) and 'Any treatment or intervention that I experience is safe and effective' (HSCS 1.24).

Grade: 3 – adequate

Quality of environment

Findings from the inspection

The secure unit had a very pleasant and homely living area with calming colours, soft furnishings and plants. There was also a flexi room with a good range of electronic games, pool, table tennis and table football and arts and crafts materials. Young people had access to a small kitchen for making snacks and drinks.

The design of the building was such that arrival into secure was via a normal domestic-style entrance way. This helped to make arrival in the service a little less daunting. We also noted that young people who were at the stage of being able to go out on leave were able to come and go through the main entrance.

During the inspection, as the weather was warm, the door to the secure outdoor space was open, which meant that fresh air could circulate.

Positive links established with the organisation responsible for the upkeep of the building meant that repairs had been carried out promptly. There was an ongoing programme of refurbishment. Rooms were being redecorated when young people had left the service, and new arrivals were able to choose the colour of their rooms.

Young people had regular access to the secure outdoor area which had been used for barbecues in the summer as well as regular sports activities. They also had access to the gym. A good selection of age appropriate games and reading materials was readily available.

One young person told us that their bed wasn't comfortable, although others thought they were alright. The manager agreed to review this.

The atmosphere in the unit was pleasant and calm, with noise (including electronic alarms) being kept to a minimum: we thought that this was an important feature of this service which contributed significantly to the quality of the environment.

Effective arrangements were in place to provide a safe environment. There had been a recent overhaul of locking mechanisms, and as result improved locks had been fitted. In addition, the CCTV system had been upgraded, providing clearer images which helped safeguard both young people and staff.

We noted that staff were vigilant and responsive to the possibility of young people bringing banned items into the unit following time out, and implemented enhanced search protocols where this was assessed as being necessary.

Overall, the service provided a safe and comfortable environment, taking into account the restrictions of a secure setting, which had a positive impact on the experience of service users, and on this basis have graded it as 5 – very good.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

This was a skilled and experienced group of staff who worked well together as a team to provide a safe, caring environment for young people.

We observed some warm, light-hearted interactions between staff and young people, and it was clear that there were some good relationships which were valued. We also noted that there had been some effective and focussed one to one work which had helped young people to address some sensitive issues. However, there was also feedback from some young people which suggested that not all staff acted with sensitivity and/or respect. We shared this information with the manager during the inspection, and while it warrants further exploration, we did read some records which reflected a lack of empathy or understanding of young people's situations.

From this, we identified a need to develop a strategy to make sure that all staff have an understanding of the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on young people's behaviour, and embed this in their practice. We were pleased to note that the service had already identified this as an area for action in their development plan, and were testing the approach in another part of the service. In addition, training around conditions, including ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) and ASD (autism spectrum disorder) would be of benefit. **(See recommendation 1.)**

The service had experienced difficulties in maintaining optimum staffing levels over the summer period. The deployment of inexperienced agency staff, although not frequent, was raised as a particular concern by staff. Together with meeting the very complex needs of some young people, this had had an impact on the team's ability to provide the best quality experience for young people. Managers had continued to review staffing needs on a weekly basis, and had made strenuous efforts to deploy staff so as to meet young people's needs. However, we found that there had been an impact in terms of being able to support young people to attend pre-planned appointments, and to provide a varied range of activities. **(See recommendation 2.)**

Overall, despite the important strengths identified in the core staff team, we found that the inability to maintain optimum staffing levels had limited the service's ability to consistently provide the highest standard of care for young people, and consequently have graded the Quality of staffing as 3 - adequate.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. The service should take forward its plan to make sure that all staff have an understanding of the impact of trauma and adverse childhood experiences on young people's behaviour, and have this embedded in their practice.

Staff would also benefit from training to enhance their knowledge of conditions which affect young people, including Autism and Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD).

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards (HSCS) which state that 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (HSCS 3.14) and 'I am supported and cared for sensitively by people who anticipate issues and are aware of and plan for any known vulnerability or frailty' (HSCS 3.18).

2. The service should make sure that at all times there are sufficient qualified and experienced staff in place to meet the needs of young people. In particular, the service should have in place a contingency plan to make sure that no young person is prevented from attending medical appointments because of insufficient staff.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that 'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

Grade: 3 – adequate

Quality of management and leadership

Findings from the inspection

We found that the management and leadership in this service was very good.

The registered manager, together with the team leader and assistant team leaders were visible, supportive and approachable by staff, young people and parents. People we spoke to from outwith the service also expressed confidence in the manager to deal effectively with any issues raised.

Where appropriate and necessary, the manager was directly involved in care planning, with particular reference to securing positive destinations for young people moving on from the service.

There were some effective quality assurance mechanisms implemented by senior care staff which had a positive impact on the quality of the service: these included care plan audits and incident recording and analysis. During the inspection, we suggested that medication audits could be improved by more rigorous analysis of records, and noted that this was immediately implemented.

Staff at all levels within the service were given opportunities to contribute to the development of the service, for example, by devising staff rotas and by liaising with colleges around student placements. There were

opportunities for developing leadership skills through acting up and task shadowing. All staff we met with felt well-supported and valued.

The service's development plan was dynamic and responsive to young people's voices, staff views and feedback from families and relevant professionals, and rooted in local and national agendas aimed at improving young people's care experiences.

In addition, the service was continuing its collaboration with Napier University's forensic psychology department in conducting research into key areas of importance for young people, with a progressive action plan based on the evidence gathered from secure-care experienced young people. We noted that many of the key elements of the plan were already in progress, and reflected some of the main findings of this inspection.

Overall, we found that there were major strengths in the management of this service and consequently have graded this as 5 - very good.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 5 - very good

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
19 Sep 2018	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
9 Oct 2017	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
22 Mar 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed
29 Jun 2016	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 3 - Adequate Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
23 Feb 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Not assessed Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings
26 Mar 2015	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 4 - Good
23 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 4 - Good Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 5 - Very good
20 Mar 2014	Announced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
30 Aug 2013	Unannounced	Care and support 2 - Weak Environment 2 - Weak Staffing 4 - Good Management and leadership 2 - Weak
7 Nov 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 4 - Good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
1 Jun 2012	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 2 - Weak Staffing 5 - Very good Management and leadership 4 - Good
24 Nov 2011	Unannounced	Care and support 5 - Very good Environment 5 - Very good Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership 3 - Adequate
18 Feb 2011	Announced	Care and support 6 - Excellent Environment Not assessed Staffing Not assessed Management and leadership Not assessed

Date	Type	Gradings	
11 Aug 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
10 Feb 2010	Unannounced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	Not assessed
10 Sep 2009	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	5 - Very good
		Management and leadership	5 - Very good
12 Feb 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	Not assessed
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	Not assessed
		Management and leadership	4 - Good
18 Nov 2008	Announced	Care and support	5 - Very good
		Environment	4 - Good
		Staffing	4 - Good
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate

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