

Springfield House Care Home Service

Cupar

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
29 March 2021

Service provided by:
Applied Care & Development Limited

Service provider number:
SP2003003432

Service no:
CS2013317845

About the service

Springfield House is a care home service registered to care for up to nine young people between the ages of 8 and 19 years. It is situated in a rural location near Cupar in Fife.

The provider of the service is Applied Care and Development Limited, (ACAD), a private limited company with its registered office in Dumfries. The premises consist of a detached, two-storey former farmhouse, Ladeddie Farmhouse and a detached single storey house, Ladeddie Steading. The houses are adjacent to one another.

The service has been registered with the Care Inspectorate since 30 October 2013, with Ladeddie Steading added to the registration on 6 April 2017.

The inspection took place under the Covid-19 restrictions and the revised methodology for conducting inspections in these circumstances. The care service was not visited by an inspector and this report has been completed after undertaking virtual meetings and receiving information from different sources.

The service provider's website states: "The needs of each young person determines the type of service applied. In providing consistency in our therapeutic approach to the health and wellbeing of young people, we practice a minimum of 1:1 staffing support."

What people told us

During the inspection we spoke with one young person, care service staff, professionals from other agencies and looked at feedback obtained by the care service from placing social workers about the quality of the service provided. We also read feedback which had been received from former residents and family members.

We found from the above sources the young people believed the care service were caring for them appropriately and were working hard to provide the best care for them.

We were told young people considered themselves to be in a safe environment and appreciated being involved in the decision-making processes of their care plans.

We were told by the care service they had built positive relationships with the young people and understood their welfare needs.

Other professionals involved with the care service considered they provided a supportive service and put the young people's needs at the centre of their practice. They considered positive relationships had been formed which benefitted the overall outcomes for young people in their care.

It was acknowledged by the care service there had been a considerable change in the care staff and management team over the past year. This had led to some frustration from the staff group and the young people around consistency of practice and, coupled with the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, had created several challenges which had been difficult for everyone involved.

The service provider informed us that most staff vacancies had now been filled and a new permanent manager was about to start in the coming weeks.

We were told because of the difficulties experienced by the care service a year ago, they had deliberately maintained a low level of occupancy whilst they re-established their staff team and reviewed their admission procedures.

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?

4 - Good

We found the care service had worked very hard at trying to establish a consistency of approach with a relatively new staff and management team.

We found all of those we spoke with to be enthusiastic and committed to the welfare of the young people they were currently caring for.

We found the care service had insight into the care needs of individuals and overall assessed the service to be at a good level of care.

We found young people had been and were generally positive about the support they received. They talked about their belief that the care service team treated them with respect and understood them.

We found the care service had ensured they had access to appropriate health resources and, although we did not visit the premises, it was apparent the young people's meal preferences were met and they enjoyed a good diet.

We found the young people were actively involved in the preparation of their own food.

We found there was an enthusiasm amongst the care service to get things right which had at its centre the young people. This included them being spoken to in a respectful way and always trying to respond to their individual needs.

This inspection took place during the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions and the care service faced limitations on what they could provide in terms of activities for young people.

It was clear the young people had an understanding of their care plan and had opportunities to contribute.

We found their views were sought and considered and the appropriate persons were invited and contributed to reviews at planning meetings.

We found young people understood the internal complaints system and knew how to make one should they wish to.

We found the care service had experienced some difficulties in the past which had been reflected in their previous inspection report, but the service provider had addressed the areas of concerns and had worked hard with the staff team in establishing a consistency of approach.

We found because of the low occupancy and the staff group still being relatively new, there was little knowledge or understanding at this time of how the care service would operate once capacity increased. We have identified one area for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. The service provider should ensure consistency of interactions with young people within the care service is fully established and maintained. The service provider should ensure young people's individual needs are always at the centre of their day to day living and care staff are fully adaptable to changing dynamics within the home.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard. 'My care and support is consistent and stable because people work together well.' (H&SCS 3.19)

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

We found the senior management personnel (service provider) had remained consistent and worked very hard in ensuring the issues pointed out at the last inspection were addressed and the relatively new staff team were supported and trained to appropriate levels.

Overall we found the leadership to be at a good level.

We found they had made sure they were available to the care staff as much as possible and supported the temporary management team within the care service as much as possible.

We found the service provider had a vision as to what they wanted to achieve and their commitment to the care staff team and young people was evident from the positive comments we heard.

We acknowledge there had been vacancies within the staff group and the care services management team and, along with the pandemic restrictions, this had been a difficult period for the leadership.

We found over an extended period the management team had worked hard to ensure the supervision of care staff and young people's care plans were maintained.

We found the service provider had looked seriously at the admissions process and had revised this accordingly. We have identified one area for improvement.

Areas for improvement

1. The service provider should continue with their aim to establish a positive and supportive working environment by ensuring regular quality assurance processes continue to be carried out and incorporated into the development of the care staff's role.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards: 'I benefit from a culture of continuous improvement with the organisation having robust and transparent quality assurance processes' (H&SCS 4.19), 'I experience high quality care and support because people have the necessary information and resources' (H&SCS 4.27).

How good is our staff team?

3 - Adequate

We found the care staff team to be committed and enthusiastic in their attitude towards the work they were undertaking.

We found there was a diversity of experience, knowledge and skills within the staff group.

We found a significant amount of the current staff team were inexperienced in working within this sector. Overall, we evaluated this part of the inspection at an adequate level.

We found the young people responded to the supports and care that were provided and we acknowledge the difficult circumstances the service had operated under during the past year.

We found an enthusiasm within the care staff team to learn and gain knowledge about the young people they were caring for.

We found that some care staff lacked a full understanding of the role they were being asked to undertake. This was understandable given some of their previous experiences, but when the occupancy level of the home increases careful management will be required to ensure the staff group is not overwhelmed. We have identified one area for improvement.

1.

The care service should ensure the process of all training undertaken by the care staff team is seen to be relevant, that the training has impacted on the improvement of the individual within the team and made a difference to the service delivered to young people.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standard: 'I have confidence in people because they are trained, competent and skilled can reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes' (H&SCS 3.14).

How good is our setting?**4 - Good**

The care service was not visited during this inspection, so the question was assessed through information provided by the young people and the views of care staff.

Overall, we evaluated this part of the inspection as good.

We found in the responses we received that everyone considered the accommodation to be comfortable and secure.

We found from the responses we received young people were happy with their accommodation and considered it a safe environment to live in.

We found at the time of the inspection that due to the occupancy levels being very low, only one of the two buildings under this registration was being used.

We acknowledged the care service was in close proximity to other dwellings and the service provider was very conscious of trying to establish a positive neighbourly environment.

How well is our care and support planned?

4 - Good

We saw records and plans such as young people's care plans, young people's risk assessments and quality assurance plans and reports related to the overall aims and objectives of the care service.

We found they were regularly reviewed by the care service and the service provider.

Overall we evaluated this part of the care service as good.

We found care plans were written to the Getting it Right for Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing indicators and included contributions from young people and other relevant parties.

We found the plans were regularly reviewed within acceptable timescales.

We found young people appeared to understand, in most instances, what they were hoping to achieve, although the care service must ensure this is maintained when occupancy levels increase.

We found the service provider had established a robust admissions procedure which they were confident would ensure future admissions were suited to the care service.

We found the service provider, along with the care service, fully understood the need to have all plans (individual young people, care service development, policies and procedures) under continual review to ensure support was consistent and in keeping with the Health and Social Care Standards.

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

Requirements

Requirement 1

The provider must ensure that they develop a robust recruitment strategy and that they have sufficient staff working in the service at all times so that meaningful and nurturing relationships with young people are developed, staff know young people well and provide continuity of care to meet their individual needs.

This requirement was made on 16 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

The service provider carried out a recruitment drive with a focus on recruiting and retaining staff. They informed us they carried out a robust interview, induction process and paired staff with well-established staff for shadow shifts and support on shift. We saw during the inspection process sufficient care staff were currently employed and knew the young people they were currently working with well.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 2

The provider must ensure that effective processes and arrangements are in place to enable children and young people to have consistently positive learning experiences in order to reach their potential in school attendance and educational attainment.

This requirement was made on 16 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

We were told managers had continued to build and strengthen links with local primary and secondary schools to ensure a smooth transition, should a child need to move authorities for education.

Programmes of individualised informal education centred around each child were devised and implemented.

We were told and saw any wellbeing factors that had been a barrier to education were being addressed through Looked After Children (LAC) process.

Met - within timescales

Requirement 3

The provider must ensure that notifications are made to the Care Inspectorate which cover the full range of notifiable events listed in the document 'Records that all registered care services (except childminding) must keep and guidance on notification reporting'. The provider must further ensure that all notifications are fully updated as necessary and that this is completed in a timely manner.

This requirement was made on 16 January 2020.

Action taken on previous requirement

We saw that a new notification document has been introduced to the service for recording all notifications made which was reviewed monthly.. The monthly review was added to the manager's monthly auditing document.

Conference calls now took place weekly between both managers and senior managers, with notifications as part of the agenda.

The Care Inspectorate acknowledged they had been receiving appropriate notifications for the past year.

We were told managers would review the notification and record-keeping document and keep a notification folder for reference. We considered this requirement had been met.

Met - within timescales

What the service has done to meet any areas for improvement we made at or since the last inspection

Areas for improvement

Previous area for improvement 1

The provider must ensure that its anti-bullying policy is fully updated. The service should devise and implement a service specific policy based on this document which is sufficiently robust, effective and understood by all staff, children and young people.

This area for improvement was made on 16 January 2020.

Action taken since then

We were shown the updated policy and found the care staff and young people were aware of this.

Previous area for improvement 2

In order to ensure that children and young people's records reflect fully their experiences and agreed process for reducing risk, the service should ensure that there is an effective and robust quality assurance process in place and that all staff are fully cognisant with the service's care planning approach.

This area for improvement was made on 16 January 2020.

Action taken since then

As indicated in the main part of the report and what we heard through feedback, a great deal of work had been undertaken by the service provider in establishing a robust quality assurance process. Further areas for improvement have been identified as a result of this.

Complaints

There have been no complaints upheld since the last inspection. Details of any older upheld complaints are published at www.careinspectorate.com.

Detailed evaluations

How well do we support children and young people's wellbeing?	4 - Good
1.1 Children and young people experience compassion, dignity and respect	4 - Good
1.2 Children and young people get the most out of life	4 - Good
1.3 Children and young people's health benefits from their care and support they experience	4 - Good
How good is our leadership?	4 - Good
2.2 Quality assurance and improvement are led well	4 - Good
How good is our staff team?	3 - Adequate
3.2 Staff have the right values, skills and knowledge to care for children and young people	3 - Adequate
3.3 Staffing levels are right and meet children and young people's needs, with staff working well together	4 - Good
How good is our setting?	4 - Good
4.1 Children and young people experience high quality facilities	4 - Good

4.3 Children and young people can be connected with and involved in the wider community	4 - Good
How well is our care planned?	4 - Good
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects children and young people's needs and wishes	4 - Good

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