

Horizons Residential Care - Hillview House Care Home Service

Edinburgh

Type of inspection:
Announced (short notice)

Completed on:
23 August 2021

Service provided by:
Horizons Residential Care Limited

Service provider number:
SP201301211

Service no:
CS2015341621

About the service

This service was registered with the Care Inspectorate on 12 February 2016.

Horizons Residential Care - Hillview House provides a care home for children service for four children and young people, both male and female, aged eight years to twenty years. Three young children or young people can reside in the main house. One young person can reside in the annex for the purpose of continuing care. The service is operated by Horizons Residential Care Limited, providing residential care for young people who are assessed as requiring medium to long term care.

It is a detached building with public areas and an office on the ground floor, with bedrooms and bathrooms upstairs. A self contained annex is within the grounds of the property. The home is within close proximity to local amenities and public transport.

Horizons Residential Care mission statement includes.

'Horizon Residential Care will provide a nurturing and safe environment for the young people who will be respected and treated as individuals.

The care staff will encourage and support the young people to achieve their potential working together with the young person's family members and supporting agencies to achieve this.

The care staff will uphold and promote the rights and views of the young people.

The care staff will provide a positive living experience which meets the requirements of the National Care Standards and which is independently inspected by the Care Inspectorate.

To provide a safe place where young people have an opportunity to make positive changes, achieve their potential in life and find their place in the community.'

What people told us

During the inspection we spoke with two young people who were living at the home. Both young people told us they were very happy living at Hillview. They said that they felt the staff really cared about them. They said they felt safe and they always had someone to talk to. They spoke about outings they had been on over the summer.

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

5 - Very Good

The young people we met during the inspection benefited from some very meaningful and positive relationships and enjoyed cuddles and affection from staff. Whilst there had been significant staff changes in the past six months there was little evidence that this had impacted on the young people.

We saw that staff were sensitive to culture and diversity and encouraged the young people to be tolerant and kind to each other.

Staff knew the young people well and were aware of their goals and plans helping them to achieve and make progress.

During the inspection a young person was in transition to the annex. The young person was being supported

by staff from another Horizons service. Staff at Hillview felt they were not included in the transition. We discussed this with managers and plans were made to involve Hillview staff which meant that the young person could be supported when needed.

Young people told us they felt listened to and their views were taken into account and we found strong evidence that young people make decisions and choices about their lives and how they spend their time.

Both young people had very positive learning experiences, both were engaging well with school and achieving in their education. Staff worked alongside the schools to provide support to the young people to continue with this progress and build ambition.

The young people enjoyed activities which helped to build self-esteem. Whilst we saw some planned outings over the summer we would like to see evidence of more opportunities for young people to broaden their experiences out with Hillview.

We saw evidence that the service had used external advocacy services for young people in the past. We asked that the service consider how they could promote regular external advocacy for all young people.

The child protection policy needed to be reviewed. However there were no evident child protection issues. The service had expectations that social workers would visit providing external safeguarding.

Staff demonstrated reasonable understanding of the effects of trauma and attachment and there were plans to further develop this model of care.

All of the young people had access to appropriate healthcare services including CAMHS, and could make informed choices about healthy lifestyles..

Medication was administered appropriately.

Young people enjoyed good nutrition and learned about healthy eating. Mealtimes provided a social occasion where young people sat together with staff and enjoyed their meals. Young people played an active part in menu planning, budgeting, shopping for food and preparing meals for themselves and others.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to ensure that service users are protected, the provider should ensure that the Child Protection Policy and Procedure is reviewed to reflect current child protection guidance.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that " I am protected from harm, neglect, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities". (HSCS 3.20)

How good is our leadership?

4 - Good

The service had been operating with an acting manager for a few months. Staff told us that the acting manager had been supportive during that time and had maintained the positive outcomes for the young people. The new manager was in post at the time of the inspection and was taking part in an induction process. In discussion we found that the new manager had a very positive vision for the future of the service.

The ownership of Horizons Residential Care had changed in March 2021. The new directors had extensive business experience, however not within the field of childcare. The directors had developed a new business model for the company which included external audit. They had identified areas for improvement and had produced a detailed action plan to support improvement. They had also developed a staff supervision and appraisal system linked to professional progression. All of these were in the early stages of implementation at the time of inspection. We will consider the impact of this at future inspections.

The directors had established a management structure which included experienced child care practitioners. They need to be guided by these practitioners. In order to progress this all of the management team need to have clear job descriptions and guidance on their roles. Good communication in the coming months will be key to embedding the management structure and the direction of Horizons Residential Childcare.

We found that some staff had received regular one to one supervision and the supervision notes we saw for these staff demonstrated, support and expectations in terms of accountability. However, some staff had not received one to one supervision for some time which had impacted on their development and morale.

In addition staff meetings had not taken place since May. Whilst it was understandable that meetings might be more limited during school holidays regular meetings to discuss case work, house routines, and management updates should be given due priority. This effects planning for the house and could result in inconsistency. Regular staff meetings could provide an opportunity for the manager to hear staffs views and provide feedback and updates. This may help to improve staff morale and support better communication between directors, managers and staff. Minutes of a staff meeting held in March identified an approach to including staff in self assessment, however it is unclear who this was shared with or what impact their views had.

There were very few incidents at the service involving young people. Any incidents were well recorded and appropriately notified to the care inspectorate.

Areas for improvement

1. In order to ensure that service users have confidence in the people caring for them they should ensure that all staff experience regular one to one supervision and participate in regular team meetings.

This is in order to ensure that 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, are able to reflect on their practice and follow their professional and organisational codes". (HSCS 3.14)

How good is our staff team?

4 - Good

At the time of the inspection some staff reported that morale was low at Hillview. Some staff had left although some continued to work at Hillview on a sessional basis. The reasons for the low morale were indicated to be the changes made by the new owners/directors. Despite this the young people continued to demonstrate very positive outcomes.

The service had a core group of staff who know the children well. They could also call on some regular sessional staff and staffing support from other Horizons houses. In order to provide consistency for young people each house needs to have a core group of staff who work with them. We said that movement of staff between houses should be kept to a minimum.

Horizons Residential Childcare has a stated ratio of 1:1 staffing for each young person. Whilst staff told us, and rotas evidenced that enough staff were on duty to meet the needs of the young people, in some months there had been heavy dependency on relief staff. The directors evidenced that they had recently recruited new staff with the necessary skills and experience. We stressed the importance of staff retention in order to provide consistency for young people and will continue to monitor this at future inspections.

The named manager at this service also manages another Horizons Residential service and splits her hours between the two services. It is a condition of registration that "Under the peripatetic management structure the maximum number of services which the manager can have responsibility for is two. The other service linked to this structure being Braeside House, CS2014334337. The manager or person acting on behalf of the manager will be supernumerary". In order to evidence this the supernumerary hours for the person acting in absence of the manager should be identified on the rota.

Interviews were carried out by a senior from care team, HR, and Director. The service manager has the final decision. The girls have not been involved in recruitment and providers should consider how they could involve young people in staff recruitment.

Staff had carried out some training in the past few months, though emphasis has been on Health and Safety, First Aid and Food Hygiene, which whilst all very appropriate, need to be further back up with child specific training such as trauma and themes specific to the young people being cared for. We were reassured that the new manager had already began development of a training analysis and a plan to identify how training needs will be met.

We were unable to look at staff recruitment at this inspection, however will follow this up at future Horizons Residential Care inspections.

1. In order to ensure that service users have consistency in the people caring for them they should consider how they can improve retention of staff.

This is in order to ensure that care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards which state that "I am supported and cared for by people I know so that I experience consistency and continuity". (HSCS 4.16)

How good is our setting?

4 - Good

Young people could stay in contact with the wider world through school, internet, and safe use of social media. The service provider had been proactive by installing additional internet cover as the poor connection had caused some frustration to the young people.

Young people used local resources, parks, swimming pools and leisure centres and transport was available to get them where they needed to be.

The home had enough communal spaces where young people could socialise and be part of a group, or spend time on their own if they wished.

Some redecoration had taken place and we saw a plan for continued refurbishment. It may be helpful if the plan and schedules could be made known to young people and staff so that they can be understanding of any ordering timescales for materials or furnishings.

There had been a recent fire at the service and we asked the director to discuss fire prevention methods with the Fire Service in order to ensure they continue to be appropriate. The director was awaiting a formal reply from the Fire Service.

How well is our care and support planned?

5 - Very Good

All of the children had care plans which provided some guidance for staff about how they could work with young people to help them achieve and keep them safe. Each had a risk assessment identifying how to manage and minimise risks. Changes were made to risk assessments as a result of unsafe or successful sustained behaviour.

Through staff discussion we were confident that staff knew how to work with the young people and keep them safe.

Each young person had a pen profile which was detailed and gave a good reflection of the young person and their needs.

Young people were involved in their care plans. They had made written comments on them and had signed them. The plans identified individual goals and strategies to achieve these goals.

We saw evidence that Social Workers agreed to the care plans and statutory Looked After and Accommodated Children (LAAC) reviews took place. Whilst some of the LAAC paperwork was missing from files it was quickly found by the keyworker.

The service should consider how they could use the Getting It Right For Every Child (GIRFEC) wellbeing wheel to assess needs and measure progress.

Weekly planners evidenced activities and appointments, however these were not all up to date.

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?	5 - Very Good
1.1 Children and young people experience compassion, dignity and respect	5 - Very Good
1.2 Children and young people get the most out of life	5 - Very Good

1.3 Children and young people's health benefits from their care and support they experience	5 - Very 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?	4 - Good
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
4.3 Children and young people can be connected with and involved in the wider community	4 - Good
How well is our care planned?	5 - Very Good
5.1 Assessment and care planning reflects children and young people's needs and wishes	5 - Very Good

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