

Ardlui Respite House Care Home Service

25 Charlotte Street
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Type of inspection:
Unannounced

Completed on:
9 May 2022

Service provided by:
Sense Scotland

Service provider number:
SP2003000181

Service no:
CS2010249688

About the service

The service is located in Helensburgh and is managed by Sense Scotland. Ardlui House provides a short stay service for up to five children and young people at anyone time. Those using the service have a range of disabilities, including learning disabilities, complex health needs and/or physical disability. The service can support young people up to the age of 24 years, however the older age range of young people, are supported outwith times when younger children are using the service.

The service aims to: "Provide a high quality, flexible and responsive service to enable disabled children and young people to live within their own family home and within their own community until they reach adulthood".

About the inspection

This was an unannounced inspection which took place on 19 and 21 April 2022. The inspection was carried out by one inspector from the Care Inspectorate. To prepare for the inspection we reviewed information about this service. This included previous inspection findings, registration information, information submitted by the service and intelligence gathered since the last inspection. In making our evaluations of the service we:

- spoke with and observed three young people using the service.
- we received feedback from two family members.
- we spoke with five members of staff and management.
- we observed practice and daily life.
- reviewed documents.

Key messages

- Recruitment of a new manager was underway.
- Supporting information about children and young people was of a good standard.
- Activities were varied to suit the needs and wishes of individual children and young people.
- Clear decisions had been taken to safeguard the needs of children and young people by operating within capacity.
- Feedback from families was mostly positive.
- Staff recruitment and skill building in the staff team was underway.
- Improvement planning was a key priority.
- Review meetings schedule should be prioritised.
- Medication practices should be reviewed.
- Personal plans should have clear outcome focused objectives.

From this inspection we evaluated this service as:

In evaluating quality, we use a six point scale where 1 is unsatisfactory and 6 is excellent

How well do we support children and young people's rights and wellbeing?	3 - Adequate
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Further details on the particular areas inspected are provided at the end of this report.

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

3 - Adequate

We evaluated Quality Indicator 7.1 of this Key Question as good. This was because there were a number of important strengths that had a significantly positive impact on people's experiences and outcomes. We also evaluated Quality Indicator 7.2 of this Key Question as adequate, where evidence for this indicator showed that some strengths just outweighed weaknesses. There was a need for leaders to improve the capacity and resources in the service to champion the needs of those wishing to use Ardlui House.

Interim management arrangements were in place to support the work of the service, whilst the provider was recruiting for a new manager. Although the assistant manager had lengthy experience of working at Ardlui House, they were less experienced in a management role and therefore the external manager was providing direct coaching and on site support, to promote the safety and wellbeing of both staff and young people.

Supporting information was of a good standard and helped staff to understand the needs of children and young people using the service. Our observations during inspection confirmed that children and young people were relaxed and engaged in ways most suited to their needs and wishes. This included planned activities and during situations where young people were able to self occupy for short periods. This practice allowed children and young people to make choices and was supportive of a fun experience.

Pre-stay forms were an essential part of support planning for children and young people's short breaks. The importance of clear and accurate information from parents and carers was understood and we found that the service followed up with parents where more information was required. This meant that children and young people's safety and wellbeing remained a priority during each visit. Similarly, end of stay records helped families to better understand how their child or relative had spent their time, when away from home.

Since reopening in October 2020, following the period of lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the service had operated at reduced occupancy in order to safely manage young people's care and support. We acknowledged the limitations placed on the experiences of families throughout the pandemic, particularly during times when some young people could not be safely supported, due to a variety of staffing constraints, including skill and experience within the staff group. However, where possible, children and young people had been supported and where local resources remained closed or had restricted usage, we found that staff had tried to optimise positive outcomes for those in their care, by being creative and flexible in their approach. Skill building opportunities, such as, baking, meal preparations, attending to their own personal care and learning to share space and take turns when involved with others, enabled children and young people to grow and flourish.

Families had been grateful for the service, expressing strong indications of feeling supported and included. Comments from parents confirmed that they felt their son/daughter was happy to attend and staff were always positive and upbeat in their approach to meeting their child's needs and wishes. We heard about one issue with wheelchair access to one of the vehicles. It appeared that this had been unavailable for some time and we asked the provider to resolve any issue preventing young people from optimising their experiences and outcomes.

Whilst staff remained positive, with staffing levels being routinely appropriate, the skill mix of staff offered less stability. We could see evidence of the provider's consistent efforts to recruit the right people and we were encouraged, as those we spoke with during inspection, held well developed values, which were consistent with the aims and objectives of the service. Time was required to make further assessment of

competence and suitability and induction training, to some extent, provided the opportunity to invest in the learning and development of new staff. We reviewed recruitment records for those who were new to post. These were robust and offered assurance of safe practices.

Since the last inspection, which took place in 2019, the provider had hoped to progress areas for improvement which had been highlighted at that time. For example, personal plans and outcome focused records relating to children and young people's care and support. Given the unprecedented circumstances around the pandemic, improvement planning had been a lesser priority. There was no improvement plan for the service, which may have allowed for some measure of progress. However, the external manager had been proactive in undertaking a full review of the service more recently and this offered insight, to where improvement was required.

Additionally, despite some systems in place to monitor performance, these were largely ineffective and the service was only now beginning to re-implement improved systems and processes which would allow for ongoing assessment and evaluation of the effectiveness of supports for children, young people and their families. One key aspect of improvement related to medication practices and despite there being no errors notified to the Care Inspectorate since the last inspection, we provided current guidance to the service and will review practices and progress more widely, at the next inspection.

Areas for improvement

1. To ensure that all children and young people's care and support needs are reviewed regularly, the provider should implement a plan of projected meeting dates for each person using the service. Meetings with all relevant people should take place at least once in every twelve months, or as required where an individual's circumstances change. This will ensure that all children and young people's needs and wishes remain a priority.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'My care and support meets my needs and is right for me' (HSCS 1.19).

2. To ensure that children and young people's care and support is delivered effectively, the provider should ensure that outcome focused personal plans contain SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timebound) objectives. This will help to prioritise children and young people's needs and wishes.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

3. To ensure safe and effective medication practices, the provider should consider existing measures and improve upon aspects of these, where possible, particularly in respect of storage and administration. This will ensure more robust practices in support of children and young people's safety and wellbeing.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice' (HSCS 4.11).

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

We found that the service used a high number of agency staff. Although specific staff were consistently involved with the service and their knowledge of young people's support needs was good, we were concerned that almost every shift was supported by agency cover. Shortages of staffing over several months leading up to this inspection, meant that management time had been subsumed into daily support practices. The provider was currently in the process of recruiting additional members of staff and new appointments were imminent. In order for young people to optimise their experiences and develop relationships with key staff, the provider should ensure that optimum staffing arrangements are in place and are sustained.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'My needs are met by the right number of people' (HSCS 3.15).

This area for improvement was made on 4 June 2019.

Action taken since then

The provider was not using a high level of agency staff at this inspection. Instead deciding to offer care and support, only where the staffing capacity in the service allowed for the safe care of children and young people. There was a recruitment process underway, to attract more staff to the service.

Previous area for improvement 2

Whilst planning for and implementing activities was a key strength of the service, we found that personal outcome focused plans were not in place for all young people. We also noted that review and evaluation of agreed outcomes, where these were recorded, was not robust or consistent. This meant that in many instances, young people's progress was not measured or recorded. Given the complex needs of the majority of young people accessing the service, we believed that a more systematic approach was needed to ensure that all young people had outcome focused plans and that these were reviewed and evaluated regularly. By doing so, young people and their families will better recognise ways in which the service can be enhanced to meet their needs and wishes.

This is to ensure that care and support is consistent with Health and Social Care Standards which states that:

'My personal plan (sometimes referred to as a care plan) is right for me because it sets out how my needs will be met, as well as my wishes and choices' (HSCS 1.15).

This area for improvement was made on 4 June 2019.

Action taken since then

We have repeated aspects of this area for improvement as we were not satisfied with progress at the time of this inspection. The provider offered clear accountability in respect of taking work forward on outcome focused personal plans and we will review progress at the next inspection.

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 rights and wellbeing?	3 - Adequate
7.1 Children and young people are safe, feel loved and get the most out of life	4 - Good
7.2 Leaders and staff have the capacity and resources to meet and champion children and young people's needs and rights	3 - Adequate

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