

Inspection of Midlothian Residential Service for Young People

Report by Joan Tranent, Head of Children's Services

1 Purpose of Report

This report outlines the outcome of the above unannounced Inspection as carried out by the Care Inspectorate in September 2017.

2 Background

2.1 Midlothian Residential Services consists of three, 4 bed-roomed residential homes in Penicuik, Dalkeith and Gorebridge. Each home cares for four young people who are aged between 10 and 18 years, who cannot safely stay with their own family. The homes in Penicuik and Dalkeith are purpose built single storey houses. The home in Gorebridge where five children were residing is on older property on two levels. At the time of the inspection only the homes in Penicuik and Gorebridge had young people staying there. The Dalkeith house was closed for refurbishment.

2.2 The Care Inspectorate is the Independent scrutiny and improvement body for care services in Scotland. They inspect all registered care services and local authority social work department on a regular basis to ensure that providers are meeting standards required and are working to improve the quality of care for everyone. Every time they inspect these services they produce an inspection report.

2.3 Based on the findings of this Inspection the Care Inspectorate awarded the following grades on the two areas it inspected:

Quality of Care and Support	Grade 4 - Good
Quality of Staffing	Grade 4 - Good

The Care Inspectorate did not inspect the quality of Management and Leadership or the Environment on this occasion which remains at Grade 5 – Very Good.

2.4 The Inspection Team noted the following strengths:

- That young people using this service were achieving some good outcomes including improved relationships with families, nurturing care within the service and all the young people they spoke with, identified key positive relationships with staff.
- Supported transitions home and the work staff have done with families was found to have been key in supporting good outcomes. Partnership working with colleagues was supporting good outcomes for individual young people in relation to their health.
- Most of the team felt well supported in their role and that most of the staff could go to management for support and advice.
- Most staff were hopeful for the future of the service and positive about the vision of the service.

2.5 The Inspection Team reported that the authority could do better in the following areas:

- Beginnings and endings – whilst there was evidence of rigorous and robust planning prior to being accommodated, ‘matching’ (fully considering the needs of the young person, young people already in placement and the knowledge and skills of staff) was not always evident.
- Resources required should reflect all diverse individual needs and ensure that care for one young person should not overly affect the care of others.
- Staff did not feel that they had a voice in changes affecting the service which had contributed to low morale.
- The discontinuation of a written log book in order to reduce duplication of recording and a further burden to staff was highlighted as a concern as it was deemed that our systems were not robust enough to ensure all important information is recorded and communicated effectively.

3. Summary

From this Inspection, Midlothian Residential Services have maintained good grades despite what has been a very challenging summer period. Staff have continued to evidence their commitment to offer a high level of care and to learn new skills. They evidence good partnership working with health colleagues in particular around one particular young person in order to ensure that the young person remained within our residential setting.

Whilst this has had some impact on both the other young people and staff we have worked through this turbulent period.

The Inspectors note one requirement:

- Reinstate the log book as required and ensure that this and other communications systems are fit for purpose. **This requirement has already been actioned.**

The Inspection noted two recommendations:

- To ensure that young people receive the care they need: decision about moving in and out of the service should involve young people, their family and others normally involved in care planning.
- To improve the involvement of young people, their families and staff in the development of the service, the provider should ensure they arrange an opportunity for all to be involved in any review of the service and make SMART plans for implementing any agreed developments or improvements.

An action plan has been devised to address these two recommendations.

4. Report Implications

4.1 Resource

There are no resource issues arising from this report.

4.2 Risk

The Care Inspectorate regulate all care services in Scotland using the [National Care Standards](#), set out by the Scottish Government, as a benchmark for how each type of service should perform. These standards are the minimum that children and young people should expect when using care services.

If the standards are not being fully met, the Care Inspectorate would note this in the inspection report and require the service manager to address these. The Care Inspectorate could impose an additional condition on the service's registration if the provider persistently, substantially or seriously fails to meet the standards or breaches a regulation. They also have the power to issue an improvement notice detailing the required improvement to be made and the timescale for this.

Monitoring, review and evaluation of progress by officers in Children's Services is the control measure in place to reduce the risk of failure of the care services and to demonstrate their capacity to improve.

4.3 Single Midlothian Plan and Business Transformation

Themes addressed in this report:

- ☐ Community safety
- ☐ Adult health, care and housing
- ☒ Getting it right for every Midlothian child
- ☐ Improving opportunities in Midlothian
- ☐ Sustainable growth
- ☐ Business transformation and Best Value
- ☐ None of the above

4.4 Impact on Performance and Outcomes

Performance and outcomes will continue to be measured through the quarterly reporting, review and evaluation process.

4.5 Adopting a Preventative Approach

The Service will continue to improve its work in line with its improvement plan. The Education, Communities and Economy Directorate will continue to challenge and support the Service in relation to developing and implementing a range of quality improvement strategies.

4.6 Involving Communities and Other Stakeholders

As part of their inspection process the Care Inspectorate spoke with four young people.

4.7 Ensuring Equalities

An action Plan has been prepared to address the areas for improvement recommended in the report. The action plan will be screened for equalities implications.

4.8 Supporting Sustainable Development

The Service Improvement Plan allows for sustainable development and improvement.

4.9 IT Issues

There are no IT issues.

5 Recommendations

Cabinet are requested to:

- Note the content of the Inspection Report.
- Acknowledge the continued progress and positive and ongoing work by management and staff connected with the Midlothian Residential Services for Young People.

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Report Contact:

Joan Tranent Tel No 271 3721

joan.tranent@midlothian.gov.uk

Background Papers:

(Appendix 1)

Care Inspectorate Report dated 1 September 2017