

Midlothian Residential Service for Young People

Care Home Service

23 Ladybrae
Gorebridge
EH23 4HT

Telephone: 0131 270 7500

Type of inspection:

Unannounced

Completed on:

14 June 2019

Service provided by:

Midlothian Council

Service provider number:

SP2003002602

Service no:

CS2003011085

About the service

Midlothian Residential Service for Young People was previously registered with the Care Commission and transferred its registration to the Care Inspectorate on 01 April 2011.

The service is provided by Midlothian Council and consists of two houses in Dalkeith and Gorebridge. The service is currently registered to provide care to nine young people aged from 10 years to 21 years.

What people told us

We spoke with four young people during the inspection and received four Care Standards Questionnaires (CSQs). Young people were largely positive but they did have some concerns about their care. The views of young people are reflected in the findings presented in this report.

Self assessment

A self assessment was not requested as part of this inspection.

From this inspection we graded this service as:

Quality of care and support	3 - Adequate
Quality of environment	not assessed
Quality of staffing	4 - Good
Quality of management and leadership	not assessed

Quality of care and support

Findings from the inspection

For the young people who have used the service over the last year outcomes and experiences have been mixed. For some we could see improvements in their wellbeing related to physical health, being active, feeling nurtured and employment opportunities. For others it was still too early to see significant improvements.

At times, negative experiences and outcomes associated with risk taking behaviour and more serious incidents of harm have overshadowed the positive experiences of care and support. We found that for those who have moved on from the service the outcomes were less positive.

Positive experience of care and support was reflected in most of the feedback we received from young people. They particularly reflected on the relationships they have with key staff, the opportunities they have to be active and quite specific support to 'feel safe'.

In relation to care and support we identified the following key strengths during the inspection visit which will help the service to address areas for improvement.

Relationships between staff and young people – The evidence for this as a strength came from discussions with most staff and young people and a number of the records we looked at. What we observed was genuine warmth and respect between staff and young people. We also observed and read about patience and respect in more challenging encounters.

Hearing the voice of young people – There was good evidence of efforts to involve and include young people in day-to-day and bigger decisions from individual care issues and recruitment of staff to moving of house. The latter experience reflected a thoughtful and considerate approach to a significant change. The move was well-managed and used as a developmental opportunity for relationships and a sense of belonging.

We identified the following areas where improvement is necessary:

Peer relationships and risk management – There was some evidence of negative relationships between young people within the service and management of these not protecting young people from risk or showing a clear cognisance of vulnerabilities. There is a need to improve knowledge and practice in relation to risk and vulnerability in young people and how this is managed in a group living environment **(see recommendation 1)**.

Care planning – There is a specific issue around the implementation of 'continuing care' in the service. The understanding of the young people affected was mixed and confused. The emphasis of a procedural, skills development approach is having an impact on both the experience of young people and the understanding of staff. The principle of staying put where you live and level of care continuing was not broadly understood nor reflected in some documentation. There was genuine confusion and distress for individual young people and the service needs to reflect on this and focus on the key principle of continuing care and step away from introducing an unnecessary formal contractual relationship between young people and the people who care for them **(see recommendation 2)**.

Relational care and other theoretical underpinning – There was less reflection on the importance of relationships and understanding stages of development than we would have expected from the staff we spoke with and there was an over emphasis on timetables, education and independence. Without relationships with carers and a clear understanding of the developmental stages of young people, we were concerned that this emphasis would place unrealistic expectations on young people and what can be achieved without the foundation of relationships.

In summary, the key strengths of the service were just outweighing the weaknesses. Areas for improvement are having an impact on the experiences and outcomes for young people and will continue to do so if they are not addressed. In light of this an evaluation of adequacy is appropriate for care and support.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 2

1. To ensure young people are protected from harm the service must improve its assessment and management of risk.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'My human rights are protected and promoted and I experience no discrimination.' (HSCS 1.2) and 'I am protected from harm, neglect, abuse, bullying and exploitation by people who have a clear understanding of their responsibilities.' (HSCS 3.20).

2. To ensure young people experience consistent care and support as they get older the provider should review their approach to continuing care, promoting a shared understanding.

This is to ensure care and support is consistent with the Health and Social Care Standards, which state that 'I experience high quality care and support based on relevant evidence, guidance and best practice.' (HSCS 4.11).

Grade: 3 - adequate

Quality of environment

This quality theme was not assessed.

Quality of staffing

Findings from the inspection

We identified the following key strengths in relation to staffing:

The development of coherent teams for each house - This was consistently mentioned by long-standing staff as the one key improvements over the past year. There are clear teams of staff employed at each service and less working across services, this has improved a sense of working together and improved the support experienced by staff. This has also seen the development of clearer identities and highlighted a difference in the journey for each service.

There is little doubt that this development in itself has been influential in the delivery of more predictable and consistent care for young people described above. We recognised this development but there is a need to be cautious as further developments around the rota and the staffing structure are newer and the service will not know the impact of these until further down the line **(see also areas for improvement)**.

Supervision and team meetings – In their ethos and improvement plan there is a commitment to developing positive cultures within the service and we are convinced that the necessary structures need to be in place to emphasise the cultural messages. In this respect we are satisfied that supervision and team meetings are working well and will provide the formal support points for staff. This is further supported by senior meetings. Consistent recording and review of actions in all meetings could be improved. Debriefing following incidents was also good where we saw evidence of this.

We identified the following key areas for development in relation to staffing:

Improving development opportunities related directly to RCC theory and practice – There were limited opportunities for practitioners and managers to improve their knowledge around residential care and specifically what has been learned from research about different ways of working or how practice in RCC is informed by child development theories. The risk to the service is greater where recruiting experienced staff and turnover has seen staff with significant experience moving on. Increasing knowledge gives staff more confidence and awareness of the importance of their role and more importantly young people will experience care which is underpinned by what is collectively known across the sector. The service has been through an existential journey for a number of years and this has been understandably focused on delivery of good care within existing resources. Updating their improvement plan should include how the service will address this finding.

Turnover of staff – Most staff reflected on the loss of key staff and for some there was a direct reference to the ending of important relationships for young people. The approach to selection and development is viewed positively and in the early stages, we will look to see the impact of this on turnover at the next inspection. It will be important for the service to gather evidence from staff who have left and those who have stayed so they can get a good picture of the specific issues around turnover for Midlothian.

In summary, it will be difficult for the service to build on the existing strengths and maximise wellbeing for young people if the areas for improvement are not addressed. Strengths do outweigh weaknesses and these strengths will have a positive impact for young people. This is consistent with an evaluation of good.

Requirements

Number of requirements: 0

Recommendations

Number of recommendations: 0

Grade: 4 – good

Quality of management and leadership

This quality theme was not assessed.

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 Jul 2018	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership
		4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
1 Sep 2017	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good Not assessed 4 - Good Not assessed
28 Oct 2016	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good Not assessed Not assessed 5 - Very good
23 Nov 2015	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good
28 Oct 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	5 - Very good 5 - Very good 5 - Very good 4 - Good
7 Mar 2014	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
23 Sep 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
26 Feb 2013	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 4 - Good 3 - Adequate
17 Aug 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership	3 - Adequate 3 - Adequate 4 - Good 2 - Weak

Date	Type	Gradings
12 Jan 2012	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 5 - Very good 3 - Adequate 4 - Good 4 - Good
21 Mar 2012	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed 3 - Adequate
5 Mar 2012	Re-grade	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership Not assessed Not assessed Not assessed 1 - Unsatisfactory
7 Jun 2011	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 5 - Very good 3 - Adequate 4 - Good 4 - Good
21 Dec 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 5 - Very good 2 - Weak Not assessed Not assessed
18 May 2010	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 5 - Very good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
10 Feb 2010	Unannounced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 5 - Very good 4 - Good Not assessed Not assessed
16 Sep 2009	Announced	Care and support Environment Staffing Management and leadership 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good 4 - Good

Date	Type	Gradings	
31 Mar 2009	Unannounced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	3 - Adequate
		Management and leadership	3 - Adequate
11 Feb 2009	Announced	Care and support	3 - Adequate
		Environment	3 - Adequate
		Staffing	2 - Weak
		Management and leadership	2 - Weak

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